

A
LETTER
FROM A
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MERCHANT

Who has left off TRADE,
TO A
MEMBER of PARLIAMENT.

IN WHICH
The CASE of the *British* and *Irish*
Manufacture of Linen, Threads, and Tapes,
is fairly stated; and all the Objections against the
Encouragement proposed to be given to that
Manufacture, fully answered.

L O N D O N:

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Price One Shilling.

LETTER

FROM

ABRAHAM

TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

IN

PARLIAMENT

THE

House of Commons of Great Britain
do hereby certify that the following
Bill has been introduced and read
the first time, and that the same
has been committed to a select
committee of the House of Commons
to consider of the same.

AND

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE
FOLLOWING BILL HAS BEEN
INTRODUCED AND READ THE
FIRST TIME, AND THAT THE
SAME HAS BEEN COMMITTED TO A
SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS TO CONSIDER
OF THE SAME.

LETTER from a Merchant, &c.

S I R,

April 12. 1738.

YOUR Letter of the 30th past, gave me a twofold Satisfaction. I was pleas'd to find a Member of our Legislature so sensible of his Duty, and so much concerned about the public Welfare; and I was pleas'd when I consider'd that such a Man was my Friend.

Gentlemen in your Station, and of your Way of Thinking, must certainly be under great Difficulties, when Application is made to Parliament for any new Regulation in Trade; for, in almost every such Case, the private Interest of Men is engaged on each Side of the Question, and both are apt to misrepresent those Facts upon which the Reasoning must be founded.

As I was long engaged in the *Dutch and Hamburgh Linen Trade*; as I got my Estate principally by that Trade; if I had any Bias, it would probably be against the Proposition now made to Parliament; and if I were still concerned in that Trade, my private Interest might, perhaps, make the Proposition appear to me in the same Light it appears to those who are our present Dealers in *foreign Linen*. But as I am now retired, and no way concerned in any Branch of Trade, I am not particularly interest'd upon either Side of the Question; and my Concern for the Welfare of my Country, is, I believe, a Balance for any Prejudice I may have in favour of that Trade by which I got my Estate.

Thus I have endeavoured to give a Reason for the good Opinion you are pleased to express of my Knowledge and Impartiality. And as the Papers you have sent me will contribute to refresh my Memory, I shall give you my Thoughts upon the Subject as fully as you require, and with that Freedom and Sincerity which is due to the Friendship subsisting between us.

In treating Matters of Controversy, a proper Method or Order contributes towards giving the Reader a clear Conception of the Affair in dispute, and towards imprinting upon his Mind the Arguments made use of on either Side of the Question; therefore I shall digest what I have to say into the following Method. I shall, first, make some Remarks upon the Nature of Trade and Manufactures in general; from whence I shall shew, that the *Linen Manufacture* is one of the most advantageous a Nation can pursue. Next, I shall shew the Advantage a Nation has by being possessed of a Manufacture, and the Methods by which another Nation may obtain the Possession of it. Then I shall consider the Progress and present State of our *Linen Manufacture*, and the Disadvantages it now labours under. After which I shall state, and endeavour to answer the Objections made against the Regulation proposed: and conclude, with shewing the Advantages the Nation may reap from the Improvement of our *Linen Manufactures*.

From Reason and Experience it is certain, that the Power and Riches of a Nation depend not upon its having Mines of *Gold* and *Silver*, but upon its having *a numerous and industrious People*. *Spain* and *Portugal* are rich in Mines of *Gold* and *Silver*, but thin of Inhabitants; and the few they have, are idle or luxurious: Therefore neither of them has any great Power; and the Riches their Slaves dig from the Bowels of the Earth, are yearly sent out for supporting the Idleness and Luxury of their People. On the contrary, *Britain* and *France* have no Mines of *Gold* or *Silver*; but they have Multitudes of People *usefully employed*,
and

and consequently are rich and powerful. So highly sensible is the wise *Chinese* Government of this Maxim, that though they have, according to all Accounts, rich Mines of *Gold* and *Silver*, they allow few or none of them to be searched after or kept open. From Experience therefore, as well as Reason, we must conclude, that, with respect to national Good, those Riches only are desirable which are gained by the Industry of a Multitude of Subjects.

The chief Methods of gaining Riches by Industry, are, Agriculture, Fishery, and Manufacture. And of these, Manufacture is the most advantageous for a Nation; because whatever may be gained that Way, will employ and maintain ten times the Number of People that can be employed and maintained, by gaining the same Sum to the Nation in either of the other Methods. Therefore, though every wise Nation will encourage Agriculture and Fishing as much as they can; yet they will always encourage both, rather with a View to render Provisions cheap among their Manufacturers, than with a View to get by exporting the Produce of either to foreign Nations; for the cheaper Provisions are in any Country, the more able will their Manufacturers be to undersel Foreigners in every sort of Manufacture.

Of all sorts of Manufacture, the *Woollen* and *Linen* are the most beneficial; because they employ the greatest Number of Hands, and are the most necessary. Which of these two ought to have the Preference, I shall not pretend to determine. But with respect to the Production of the original Materials, the *Linen* seems to have the Advantage; for there must be more Hands employed in producing a Quantity of Flax, than in producing the same Quantity of Wool. However, as these two Manufactures are so far from being inconsistent, that they support and encourage one another; and as Agriculture is absolutely necessary, and Fishing extremely convenient for the Support of both; therefore the *Woollen* and *Linen* Manufactures,

factures, Agriculture, and Fisheries, ought, and always will be jointly encouraged, as much as possible, by every wise Government.

For this Purpose, the Soil, Climate, and Situation of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, have the Advantage of every Part of the known World. Our Climate and Soil are as proper for producing Hemp and Flax, Wool, and every sort of Grain, as the Soil and Climate of any Country on Earth. And with respect to the carrying on of Fisheries, and exporting what Goods we have not use for, or importing what we stand in need of, we have, by our Situation, the Advantage of all other Nations. So that if we are outdone in Agriculture, Fishing, or Manufactures, especially of *Wool* and *Linen*, by the People of any other Country, it must be owing to some Neglect, or some wrong Step, in our Conduct, and not to any natural Disadvantage.

The four Seas are our Property; the Ocean is within our Dominion; and as we have at Land a great Variety of Soil, if we make a proper Use of what belongs to us, we cannot fail of making Profits at Sea by our Fisheries, and at Land by Agriculture, Grasing, and Sheep-walks. Some of our Lands must be employed for the Production of Corn; those which are not so proper for producing Corn, may be converted to the Production of Hemp and Flax; and those which are not proper for Agriculture, may be usefully employed in Grasing or Sheep-walks. By which means every Part of our Soil will conduce to the Improvement of the other. Therefore no Measure ought to be neglected for enabling our People to make a Profit by every one of these Methods; and no one of them deserves more to be encouraged, than the producing of *Hemp* and *Flax*, and the bringing of that Production to its utmost Perfection by Manufacture.

Bread is, without doubt, of all sorts of Produce, the most necessary. But after we have produced a sufficient

ficient Quantity of Corn for our own People, an Acre of Land would be employed much more beneficially for the Nation in producing *Hemp* and *Flax*, than in producing any Species of Corn for a foreign Market; because the *Hemp* or *Flax* that grows upon an Acre of Ground, will be of greater Value, and will maintain a greater Number of People, than any Sort or any Quantity of Corn that can be produced from that Acre. And both these Advantages may be vastly improved by Manufacture; whereas Corn is a sort of Produce that can admit of no considerable Improvement by any sort of Manufacture.

I have said, Sir, that of all the Methods of gaining Riches by Industry, that of Manufacture, especially the *Woollen* and *Linen*, is the most advantageous to a Nation. But, as you was never concerned in Trade, give me leave to explain and inforce this Doctrine a little farther. As the Produce of the Labour of industrious Poor is all clear Profit to a Nation, and as the Riches and Strength of every Nation is in Proportion to the Multitude of Subjects industriously employed; it is certain, that every Nation ought to turn their Lands and their Hands chiefly to the Produce of that which employs the greatest Number of Poor, and may be raised to the highest Value by Manufacture. Now, according to this Rule, let us examine what a Nation may gain by Grasing; by Pasture, or Sheepwalks; by Agriculture for the Production of Corn; and by Agriculture for the Production of *Hemp* and *Flax*.

In this Inquiry, I shall found my Suppositions and Calculations principally upon the Suppositions and Calculations of the ingenious and accurate *Arthur Dobbs*, Esq; in his *Essay on the Trade and Improvement of Ireland*. For though in his Suppositions and Calculations he makes use of the Plantation Acre, which is larger than the *English* Statute Acre; yet as the Lands in *England* are, I believe, upon an Average, more fruitful than the Lands in *Ireland*, therefore we
may

may reckon the Produce of an *English* Acre will be equal to what he supposes may be the Produce of an *Irish* Acre.

As to Grasing, by which he means those Grounds that are employed in fattening Cattle, Hogs, &c.; or in keeping Cows for making Butter or Cheese; he reckons the Produce cannot amount to above 11 s. 4½ d. per Acre yearly, or 12 s. and 5 d. at most. And as to Agriculture, he reckons an Acre plowed after the best Method, and employed in the Production of Wheat, may be worth to the Public, one with another, above 3 l. 5 s. per Acre yearly. Which shews how much more beneficial it is to a Nation to have their Lands employed in Agriculture, than to have them employed in Grasing.

Now, with respect to Sheep-walks, and Agriculture for the Production of *Hemp* and *Flax*; I shall first consider what an Acre may be worth to the Public in either of these Ways, when the Produce is sold without any Manufacture; and next, I shall consider what it may be worth to the Public, when the Produce is not sold till fully manufactured. If the *Wool* were sold without any Manufacture, it is certain Sheep-walks would not be of any considerable Benefit to a Nation: For the same ingenious Gentleman supposes, that three Sheep, at a Medium, will produce but a Stone of Wool; and he allows but four Sheep to an Acre in common Sheep-walks, one with another. At this rate, three Acres would maintain twelve Sheep, and produce four Stone of Wool yearly; which, at 6 s. 8 d. per Stone, is 26 s. 8 d. To which add three fat Sheep sold off yearly at 9 s. each, which is 27 s. These three Acres are therefore worth to the Public yearly 2 l. 13 s. 8 d. which is near 18 s. per annum each.

Then as to Agriculture for the Production of *Hemp* and *Flax*, an Acre of *Flax* may be computed to have thirty Stone of *Flax* fit for the Heckle; which, at 4 s. per Stone, is worth 6 l. So that every Acre of
Flax,

Flax, without any Manufacture, is worth to the Nation 6 *l.* From whence it appears, that this Method of employing our Lands is the most profitable to the Public. And to this we must add, that it gives Employment to the greatest Number of People: For the Tillage and managing of *Flax* or *Hemp*, in order to make it fit for Market, certainly employs more Hands in the same Quantity of Land, than the Tillage and managing of Wheat, or any sort of Corn; and this last employs a greater Number of Hands than can be employed in Grasing or Pasture.

But what makes Sheep-walks, and the producing of *Hemp* and *Flax*, of infinite Benefit to a Nation, is, That the Value of our *Wool*, and of our *Hemp* and *Flax*, may be vastly improved by Manufacture, and may thereby be made to employ a vast Number of more Hands. Mr *Dobbs* reckons a Stone of *Wool* manufactured, without Dying, at least worth 3 *l.* 10 *s.* Therefore I may reckon every Stone of our *Wool*, when fully manufactured, to be worth 4 *l.* to the Nation; and, consequently, that every three Acres of our Sheep-walks, producing four Stone of *Wool*, and three fat Sheep yearly, must, by proper Manufacture, be reckoned to bring 17 *l.* 7 *s.* neat Profit to the Nation; which is near 6 *l.* *per* Acre yearly. As for *Hemp* and *Flax*, the Increase in their Value by Manufacture adds still more to the Value of every Acre employed in that way. For Mr *Dobbs*, after having supposed that an Acre of *Flax* has thirty Stone fit for the Heckle, reckons these thirty Stone of *Flax* will make about three hundred and sixty Yards of *Linen*, at about 18 *d.* *per* Yard, in all about 27 or 28 *l.* Therefore we must reckon, that every Acre of *Flax*, when properly manufactured, brings 27 or 28 *l.* Profit to the Nation at a Medium. And this is certainly the lowest Medium we can take it at: For if we were to compute the Value a Pound of *Flax* might be raised to, by being wrought up into the finest sorts of Laces,

we shall find it may be made worth more than its Weight in Gold.

Having thus shewn the Advantage the Nation reaps from grasing or fattening of Cattle, &c.; from Pasture, or Sheep-walks; and from Agriculture, both for the Production of Corn, and for the Production of *Hemp* and *Flax*; it is easy to determine which deserves most to meet with public Encouragement. And as the Value of the Produce of our Lands, as well as the Numbers of our industrious Poor, are vastly increased by the *Woollen* and *Linen* Manufactures, every one must see, that these two Manufactures, and the Produce of our Lands necessary for them, deserve a more than common Regard.

I shall not pretend to find Fault with our Bounties upon the Exportation of Corn, or our Prohibitions or high Duties upon the Importation of any sort of Provisions necessary for the Support of our Poor. But I am sure, of all sorts of Exports, the Export of Manufactures deserves most to be encouraged by the Public. And as to the Produce of our Lands, it may be the Interest of private Men to enhance the Price, and not to increase the Quantity; but it is always the Interest of the Public to increase the Quantity, even though it should lower the Price. There is certainly in all sorts of Commodities an equal Price, a Price that is equally convenient for the Buyer and Seller; and this Price might be fixed by a public Law, if it were possible to fix the future Produce and Demand of any one Commodity whatsoever. But as the latter is not possible, every Law for fixing the Price of any sort of Commodity, or any sort of Labour, will be found ridiculous, and a Burden upon the Trade of every Country where such a Law happens to be established. In this respect, the only Thing a wise Nation can do, is, to leave it to the Discretion of every Individual, to produce that Commodity which he supposes will give the best Price; and to breed his Children up to that sort of Labour by which
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he thinks they may get the most certain and most comfortable Subsistence; and to take care, that every Individual shall have the Necessaries and Conveniences of Life, according to his Station, and the Materials fit for the Labour or Manufacture he has been bred to, as cheap as they can be had in any neighbouring Country.

If this Rule be observed, and the Liberty and Property of every Subject secured, a Nation may depend upon preserving every Manufacture it has once got Possession of: For it is an Advantage attending all Sorts of Manufacture, that those who have once got Possession, generally keep that Possession, till they are turned out of it by some Folly or Misconduct of their own, or by some very prudent and very extraordinary Conduct in those who endeavour to incroach upon them. In a Country where any Manufacture has been long established, their Workmen are so dextrous in every Branch of the Manufacture, and so numerous, that they work cheaper and better than the Workmen can do in any neighbouring Country; so that unless such a Country be at some Pains to drive their good Workmen away from them, or to lay them under insuperable Difficulties or insupportable Burthens, they will always, or at least for a long Tract of Years, be able to make that Manufacture better, and to sell it cheaper, than any of their Neighbours can do, especially if the original and chief Materials of the Manufacture be a Part of their native Produce.

To this Advantage I must add another, which arises from the Prevalency of Custom and Fashion. When a Country has been long in Possession of any one Sort of Manufacture, it becomes fashionable and customary among all their Neighbours to make use of their Manufacture only. It becomes a general Opinion, that no Manufacture of the same Sort, when made in any other Country, can be equally good. And the chief Merchants of every Country having settled a Correspondence for dealing in their Manufacture, can-

not easily alter their Method, or settle a new Correspondence; for which Reason they endeavour to propagate this Opinion in each of their respective Countries. This makes it vastly difficult for any neighbouring Country to set up such a Manufacture even for home Consumption. By great public Encouragements their Manufacturers may at last come to make it as good, and by Duties on Importation they may perhaps be able to sell it as cheap, as foreign Manufactures of the same kind can be sold in their Country: But even then the Nation will find it no easy Matter to root out that general Opinion, which has been long established among their People in favour of the foreign Manufacture; and some of those, even among themselves, who are in a way of getting Estates by dealing in that foreign Manufacture, will encourage the Consumption of it, rather than that of their home Manufacture; for I am afraid there are but few Men in any Country who will prefer the public Good to their private Interest, when they happen to be inconsistent with one another.

If we examine into the History of the *Woollen Manufactures in England*, we shall find what infinite Pains we were at, and what a Number of Laws were made, for establishing that Manufacture in this Country. As far back as the Reign of *Edward III.* a Law was made, *prohibiting the Importation of any Cloths made beyond Sea, on Pain to forfeit the same, and to be further punished at the King's Will.* And another Law was made in the same Reign, declaring, *That Cloth-workers of strange Lands who should come into the King's Dominions, should have the King's Protection, dwell where they pleased, and have convenient Franchises granted them.* Yet notwithstanding these penal Laws, notwithstanding these Encouragements, and notwithstanding our being in Possession of the original and chief Material for this Manufacture, we could never make any great Progress in it. The *Flemings* continued to keep Possession of it, and to furnish us with

with Cloths made of our own *Wool*, till the Government of that Country, first by high Taxes, and at last by Inquisitions, hunted most of the Manufacturers out of their Dominions.

In *France* likewise they were at great Pains to establish *Woollen* Manufactures, and made many public Regulations for that Purpose; but they could never do it with any Success, till the War which broke out between the two Nations after the *Revolution*, made it almost impossible for them to furnish themselves with any of the *Woollen* Manufactures of *England*. And every one knows how difficult they found it in *France*, to introduce and establish the Use of *Cambricks* instead of *Muslins*. Yet after it was once introduced, and become the Fashion of *France*, it soon became the Fashion almost all over *Europe*; so much that, even in this Kingdom, we have made but little use of *Muslins* for several Years, though it was very much our Interest to wear *Muslins* rather than *Cambricks*. Which evidently shews, that the Consumption of any one Sort of Commodity, or of the Manufacture of any one Country, rather than that of another, depends chiefly upon the Fashion and Whim of the Consumers.

From hence, Sir, you must be convinced, that when any Nation has a mind to set up a Manufacture which a neighbouring Nation has been long in possession of, they must neglect no Step that may tend towards the Accomplishment of their Design, and that they must be watchful to take advantage of every false Step made by those in possession. As for those Methods which a Nation may take, and which it has always in its Power to take, for encouraging the setting up of any home Manufacture, they are chiefly these: By granting Privileges, Immunities, or Rewards and Bounties, to such as shall carry it on; by laying Duties upon all foreign Manufactures of the same kind, that shall be imported and consumed within their own Dominions; and by making it the Fashion at Court
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to wear none of that Sort of Manufacture, but what is made within their own Dominions. These, I think, are the three chief Methods by which a Nation may encourage the setting up of any Manufacture; and by all these three joined together, they will find it a difficult Matter to succeed, if a neighbouring Nation has been long in Possession, unless that Neighbour contributes to their Success by some very ridiculous and false Step in Politics.

Of these three, the second only can fall properly under my Consideration at present; because, I think, it is the only one we have ever made use of for the Encouragement of our *Linen Manufacture*: Which must seem a little surprising, considering the vast Benefit the Nation might reap by an extensive and flourishing Manufacture of that useful and necessary Commodity. But what must seem still more surprising, is, that even this Encouragement was not owing to any Design of encouraging the Manufacture, but to the Necessities our Government happened to be under at the Time those Duties were imposed.

While the three Kingdoms of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, were involved in Confusion, War, and Bloodshed, during the whole Reign of King *Charles I.* and the first twelve Years of the Reign of King *Charles II.* Manufactures were but little minded. Even the *Woollen* might have run a Risk of being again lost, if *Flanders* had been at that Time under any tolerable Government, or if any other Country of *Europe* had then been in a Capacity of taking it up. By the ill State of *Flanders*, and the Inability of the rest of our Neighbours, thank God, we preserved the *Woollen* Manufacture: But, during that Time, the little we before had of the *Linen*, was almost entirely lost; for during that Time, and for many Years after, the three Kingdoms were furnished with *Linen* of all Sorts from *France*, *Flanders*, *Holland*, and *Germany*, except a small Quantity of coarse *Linens* made in *Scotland*, and some in other Parts made by private Families for their own Use.

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By this means our Neighbours got entirely into the Possession of the *Linen Manufacture*. And though it might have been expected, that at the Restoration something would have been done for recovering or improving this valuable and necessary Manufacture, yet nothing was thought of, at least no Law or public Regulation was made, for any such Purpose. However, as a Fund was then to be settled for supporting the public Expence, and as it became necessary to lay on some Taxes and Duties for that End; among others, the Tax upon the Importation of all Goods, now called the *Old Subsidy*, was thought of, one half of which only was allowed to be drawn back upon Exportation; and likewise the additional Subsidy, which was at the same Time laid upon Wines, Linens, wrought Silks, and Tobacco, the whole of which was allowed to be drawn back upon Exportation. As *foreign Linens* were by this means taxed and loaded with both these whole Subsidies when consumed at home, it became some little Encouragement for our *home Manufacture* of that useful Commodity. But as the first of these Duties was laid upon the Importation of all Goods in general, Materials as well as Manufactures; and as but one half of it was allowed to be drawn back upon Exportation; we may see it was done only with a Design to supply the public Expence, and not with a View to encourage any Sort of Manufacture. And as to the additional Subsidy, the Reason for imposing it was not so much for encouraging any Manufacture, as for raising Money for the public Service; because the four Commodities upon which it was laid, were of the most general Use; and therefore an additional Tax upon them was deemed the most advantageous for the public Revenue.

The same Observation may be made on all the other Subsidies since imposed. Only as we understood the Nature of Trade and Navigation a little better after the Revolution, than at the Time of the Restoration, we have taken care that all the Subsidies and Imposts laid
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on since the Revolution, shall be drawn back upon Exportation.

With respect to our *Linen Manufacture*, we may therefore say, Happy has it been for us that our public Necessities have been so great and so urgent! for by their means, so many Duties were from Time to Time laid upon *Linens* imported, and consumed at home, that they at last amounted to a real Encouragement, and enabled the People in several Parts of *England* to set about the making of *Linen* for Sale, as well as for the Use of their own Families. But the little Progress we have made in this Manufacture, is an evident Proof how hard it is to set up any Manufacture which another Nation is in possession of: For though the Duties upon *foreign Linen* consumed in *Britain* now amount to 13 or 14 *per Cent.* though they have amounted to so much ever since the third Year of *Queen Anne's* Reign; yet there are still vast Quantities of *foreign Linen* consumed in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*. Which is a certain Demonstration of one or other of these two Cases, *viz.* That the ancient Possessors of this Manufacture can still sell their *Linens* cheaper by 13 or 14 *per Cent.* at least, than our Manufacturers can sell *Linens* of the same Fineness and Goodness; or otherwise, That Custom, Fashion, and Opinion, prevail over Mens private Interest, and prevent the Consumption of *home-made Linens* among our own People, although they may be had at a cheaper Rate than *foreign Linens* of the same Fineness and Goodness, when sold for *home Consumption*. One of these Cases, I say, must necessarily be true: For to pretend that our Master-manufacturers might sell their *Linens* cheaper than they do or will sell them, is ridiculous; because where a great Multitude of Men are engaged in the same Manufacture, and are so independent of one another as to render it impossible for them to enter into any general Concert, it is certain they will undersell one another, till they bring the Manufacture as low as they can possibly afford to sell

sell it. And if either of these Cases be true, it is, in my Opinion, a convincing Argument, that our *Linen Manufacture* stands in need of some farther Encouragement.

What I have yet said, Sir, relates chiefly to the *Linen Manufacture of England*: For you must know, that all the Duties laid upon *foreign Linens*, were made payable upon *all Linens* imported into *England*, either from *Scotland* or *Ireland*, till the Year 1696; when we began to look upon our Neighbours in *Ireland*, not as Foreigners, but as Fellow-subjects; and therefore a Law was passed for allowing *Hemp, Flax, Thread, Yarn, and Linen*, of the Growth and Manufacture of *Ireland*, to be imported *Custom-free* into *England*. In the first Year of *Queen Anne's* Reign, a Law was passed for making *Hemp, Flax*, and the *Product* thereof, of the Growth and Manufacture of *Ireland*, free from the further Subsidy of Poundage, payable upon the Importation of Goods into *England*, mentioned in the 8th of *William III. cap. 24.* And in the Year 1705, another Law was passed, for allowing white or brown *Linen Cloth*, of the Manufacture of *Ireland*, to be transported directly from thence to the *Plantations*.

In *Ireland* they had little or no Manufacture of *Linen*, even for home Consumption, till towards the End of *King Charles II.'s* Reign; when the Persecution then raised against the *Dissenters* in *Scotland*, forced many of them over to the North of *Ireland*, where they began the *Linen Manufacture of Ireland*: For before that Time, and for some Years after, the *Irish* were furnished with considerable Quantities of *Linen* from *Scotland*; but, from that Time, they began to furnish themselves. And the Persecution set up against the *Protestants* in *France*, after the Revocation of the *Edict of Nantes* in the Year 1685, accomplished what the Persecution in *Scotland* had begun: For, after the Revolution, many of the *French Refugees* settled in *Ireland*, and greatly improved their

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Manufacture of *Linens*, especially those of the finer sort. Thus the *Irish* stand indebted for the Establishment of their *Linen Manufacture*, rather to the bad Conduct of their Neighbours, than to any good Conduct of their own, or to any Encouragement from *England*. However, the *three* Laws above mentioned contributed very much to its Increase, by giving their *Linens* an Advantage over the foreign at all the Markets in *England*; and the Prohibition laid by the Parliament of *England* on the Importation of any *Linen* from *Scotland* into *Ireland*, in the Year 1705, was of considerable Service to the *Irish* Manufacture of *Linen*. But the greatest Encouragement it has met with, has been from the *Honourable Trustees* for encouraging the *Linen* Manufacture in *Ireland*, who have neglected no Method in their Power for the Encouragement of that Manufacture; and who, for that Reason, must for ever deserve the Blessings of the Poor, and the most grateful Acknowledgments of their Country.

Now, Sir, with respect to the *Linen* Manufacture of *Scotland*, though their Consumption of *fine Linens* has always been chiefly supplied from *France*, *Flanders*, and *Holland*; yet, by the natural Genius of the People, and the Cheapness of Provisions in that Part of the Island, their Manufacture of *coarse Linens* revived so quickly after the Restoration, that they not only supplied themselves, but sent considerable Quantities of such *Linen* to *England* and *Ireland*; though we in *England* were so far from encouraging the *Linen* Manufacture of our Fellow-subjects in *Scotland*, that we made their *Linens* subject to all the Duties to which *foreign Linens* were made liable; and in the Year 1698, we laid an additional and particular Duty of 10 s. upon every 120 Ells of the *Linen* of the Manufacture of *Scotland*, called *Twill*, and 6 s. 8 d. upon every 120 Ells of *Scotch Linen*, called *Ticking*, imported or brought into *England*. And further, by an Act of the third and fourth of *Queen Anne*, we expressly

expressly prohibited the Importation of any *Scotch Linen* into *England* or *Ireland*. This last Act, it is true, continued in force but one Year; and the Union between the two Kingdoms having been soon after happily concluded, the *Scotch Linen Manufacture* not only got free of the Disadvantages it laboured under, with respect to its Importation into *England*, but became intitled to those Advantages the *Linen Manufacture* in *England* enjoyed, by means of the Duties which our Necessities had obliged us to lay upon *foreign Linens* imported, and consumed in *England*. Yet the *Scotch Linen Manufacture* had been so much depressed by the peculiar Discouragements laid upon it in *England*, and the little Care taken of it in *Scotland*, that it did not begin to retrieve any Spirit or Vigour till the last Year of his late Majesty's Reign; when the Gentlemen who had then the Honour to be in the Administration of public Affairs in *Scotland*, shewed a true and laudable Zeal for the Service of their Country, by getting an Act of Parliament passed for regulating the *Linen Manufacture* in *Scotland*; and his present Majesty, who is always ready to contribute all he can to the Happiness of his Subjects, granted his Letters Patents, in pursuance of the Powers granted by Parliament, for applying the Funds formerly by Law appropriated, to the Improvement of the Fisheries and Manufactures of *Scotland*; and for appointing twenty-one *Commissioners* or *Trustees* to take care, that those Funds should be properly applied to the Uses mentioned in the Letters Patents. Since that Time the *Linen Manufacture* in *Scotland* has been upon the mending Hand; and the *Trustees*, to their Honour, and to the great Emolument of the united Kingdoms, have most diligently and faithfully executed the Trusts reposed in them by the Laws of their Country.

From this short History of our *Linen Manufacture*, it will appear, that it is as yet but in its Infancy in every Part of *Britain* and *Ireland*. And, I am sorry

to say, it will likewise appear, that though some Care has been lately taken by the Gentlemen, both in *Scotland* and *Ireland*, to get some Regulations made for encouraging the *Linen Manufacture* in their respective Countries; yet here in *England* it has never met with any Encouragement, but what has proceeded from our public Necessities, and not from any Design to increase our Manufactures, or to give Employment and Happiness to our Poor.

However, Sir, our People in *England* have not failed to take Advantage of the high Duties our Necessities obliged us to lay on *foreign Linens* imported, and consumed here at home. By means of these Duties they have been enabled to push this Manufacture; and they have pushed it much further than you perhaps, or most other Gentlemen, imagine: For, by the following Piece of political Arithmetic, it will appear, at least highly probable, that there is now a much greater Quantity of *Linen* made in *England*, than is made either in *Scotland* or *Ireland*.

For this Purpose I shall suppose, 1st, That there are 8 Millions of People in *England*, 2 Millions in *Scotland*, 2 Millions in *Ireland*, and near 2 Millions in the *Plantations*, Slaves included: In all 14 Millions. This Supposition with respect to *England* must appear highly probable to every one who considers, that we have at least 10,000 Parishes in the Kingdom, as I have been informed by those whose Business it is to make some Inquiry into this Matter; for 8,000,000 of People in the whole, is but 800 Men, Women, and Children, to each Parish, upon an Average; which will appear to be a very modest Computation from the Number of Parishes and Inhabitants within *London* and the Bills of Mortality. By these Bills it appears, that in *London*, and within the Bills of Mortality, there die yearly, at a Medium, above 25,000 Persons: From whence we may compute the Number of Inhabitants to be 750,000; Dr *Halley* having shewn, that the thirtieth Part of the Inhabitants of any assigned Place may be supposed

supposed to die yearly, one Year with another. Now, as there are in *London*, and within the Bills of Mortality, but 145 Parishes, we must suppose there are above 5000 Men, Women, and Children, in each Parish: And consequently it must be deemed very moderate to suppose there are, upon an Average, but 800 Men, Women, and Children, in each Parish in *England*.

Then, 2^{dly}, I shall suppose, That for Shirts, Shifts, Aprons, Caps, Gowns, Waistcoats, Jackets, Childrens Frocks, Servants Frocks, Bed and Table Linen, Sacking, &c. these 14 Millions of People consume yearly 5 Ells, or 6 Yards and a Quarter, each, one with another; which cannot be an extravagant Supposition, considering that at least 3 Yards go to a Woman's Shift, and 3 and half to a Man's Shirt, and that there are very few Persons who do not consume above two Shirts or Shifts in a Year.

From these Suppositions we must compute that 14 Millions of People consume yearly

Yards
- - - - - 87,500,000

To answer this Consumption, it appears from the *Customhouse* Accounts, that from the Year 1728 to 1734 *inclusive*, there were, at a Medium, imported yearly from abroad, including *Cambricks*, not more than

Yards
- - - 32,000,000

By the second Supposition, there must be made in *Scotland*, for their home Consumption, supposing no foreign Linen imported there

Yards
12,500,000

By

By the best Information I can have, there is imported from *Scotland* into *England* and the *Plantations* } 4,000,000

Total made in *Scotland* ————— 16,500,000

By the second Supposition there must be made in *Ireland* for their home Consumption, supposing no foreign Linen imported there } 12,500,000

By the *Customhouse* Accounts it will appear, I believe, that, at a Medium, for these last seven Years, there have been imported into *England* yearly from *Ireland* } 5,000,000

Total made in *Ireland* ————— 17,500,000

Total imported from abroad, and made in *Scotland* and *Ireland* for their home Consumption, and for the Consumption of *England* and the *Plantations* } - - - - - 66,000,000

Remains of the whole Consumption, every Yard of which must be made in *England* } - - - - - 21,500,000

I know

I know it may be said, there are not two *Millions* of People, Slaves included, in our *Plantations*; and that therefore we cannot suppose there are 12,500,000 Yards of *Linen* consumed by them yearly. But suppose the Number of their People, Slaves included, is not much above *one Million*, and that they consume but 6,500,000 Yards of *Linen*, we may with great Probability suppose the additional six *Millions* consumed by the eight *Millions* of People in *England*, it being an Addition of three Quarters of a Yard only to each Person's annual Consumption. And as the People of *England* consume more *Linen* than any People in *Europe*, we may, I think, justly suppose, they consume yearly, one with another, at least seven Yards of *Linen*.

From these few Suppositions and Calculations, it is evident, I think, to a Demonstration, that there is a greater Quantity of *Linen* manufactured in *England*, than is manufactured either in *Scotland* or *Ireland*. Yet it has been insinuated, that there is little or no *Linen* made in *England*. Every one may see, that this Insinuation is made with a Design to raise a Division amongst his Majesty's *British* Subjects, and to make the Gentlemen of the *South* Parts of *Britain* imagine they have no Concern in the present Affair, nor any particular Interest in the Encouragement of the *home* Manufacture of *Linen*. But from what I have said, and from what every Country Gentleman may observe or hear of amongst his Neighbours and Tenants, it will appear, that there is hardly a County in *England* but has great Reason to encourage the *Linen* Manufacture.

It is true, the *English* Manufacture of that Commodity is not publicly known, or at least not so much taken notice of as the *Scotch* or *Irish*. But the Reason of this is very plain. In this Country most of the *Linen* we make, is made by private Families for their own Use, or made and consumed in our Country Towns and Villages; and that Part of it which comes

to *London*, is brought hither by Land-carriage; so that it is seldom heard of but among our Manufacturers and Dealers in *Linen*.—Whereas all the *Linens* sent from *Scotland* or *Ireland* to *England* must come by Sea; those from *Ireland* must be publicly entered, and those from *Scotland* must have a Coast-cocket; by which means both must be taken notice of at our Custom-house, especially here at *London*.

I have now, I think, shewn, Sir, that the *Linen Manufacture* is one of the most beneficial Methods of gaining Riches and Power to a Nation; that this Manufacture is but in its Infancy in *Britain* and *Ireland*; that therefore it is impossible for our People to sell so cheap, or to meet with such a ready Sale even here at home, as those who have had this Manufacture long established among them; and that for this Reason we cannot propose to make any great or quick Progress in this Manufacture, without some public Encouragement. The only public Encouragement yet given, at least here in *England*, arises, as I have said, from those Duties which our public Necessities obliged us to lay upon *foreign Linens* imported, and consumed in *Great Britain*. It is to this only we owe our having any considerable Quantity of *Linen* made for Sale in any Part of *Britain* or *Ireland*; but the great Quantities of *Linen* still imported shew, that this Encouragement is not sufficient. And the Reason of this Insufficiency plainly appears to be owing to a Mistake we fell into when those Duties were first imposed; which Mistake proceeded from our having imposed them, not with a Design to encourage the *Linen Manufacture*, but with a Design only to raise a Fund for the Support of our Government.

It was never supposed, that our People in the *Plantations* ought or could contribute towards the Support of our Government here at home; therefore it was thought unreasonable to subject them to those Taxes upon *foreign Linens*, which were imposed for that End only: For this Reason we always allowed the
same

same Drawbacks upon *foreign Linens* exported to our own *Plantations*, which were allowed upon those exported to any *foreign* and *independent* Country; which Mistake was so evident, that we could not but have taken notice of it, if we had at that Time had the least Thought of encouraging our *home* Manufacture by the imposing of such Duties. By allowing no Drawback upon *foreign Linens* exported to any *independent* Country, we could neither propose to have increased our Revenue, nor improved our Manufacture; we should only have injured our Navigation and Carrying-trade; because we could not prevent those Countries being supplied with such *Linens* by another Channel. But with respect to our own *Plantations*, we might have prevented their being supplied with such *Linens* by any other Channel. And though they were not perhaps obliged to contribute to the Support of our Government here at home, yet they were certainly as much obliged to contribute towards the Encouragement of our *home Manufactures*, as we are obliged to contribute to the Encouragement of their Produce. Therefore *foreign Linens* exported to the *Plantations* ought to have been allowed no Drawback, but ought to have remained liable to the same Duties with those consumed at home.

For this Reason, if we had then well considered what we were about, we should have seen that we ought to have made a Distinction between *foreign Linens* exported to any *independent* Country, and *foreign Linens* exported to our own *Plantations*. Upon the former we ought, for the sake of our Navigation and Carrying-trade, to have allowed every Shilling of the Duties to be drawn back; upon the latter we ought, for the sake of encouraging our *home Manufacture*, not to have allowed one Farthing of the Duties to be drawn back. But we did neither the one nor the other. By not allowing the whole Duties to be drawn back upon those *foreign Linens* which are exported to Countries over which we have no Power, we have greatly in-

jured our Trade with respect to our transporting or carrying of that Commodity ; and by allowing a great Part of the Duties to be drawn back upon *such Linens* when exported to our own *Plantations*, we have greatly retarded the Progress of our home Manufacture.

These two fatal Effects are evident from the Nature of Trade ; and both are confirmed by Experience. For from our Accounts of Export, we may see what a small Quantity of *foreign Linens* we export to any Country in the World except to our own *Plantations* ; and the vast Quantities of *coarse foreign Linens* exported to our *Plantations*, shew how prejudicial that Export is to our home Manufacture. But the Prejudice our home Manufacture by this means suffers, is much greater than it may appear to those who have not thoroughly considered the Nature of Manufactures : For in every Manufacture, that of the *coarse Sort* is the best to begin with ; and the only proper Sort for breeding up Workmen, and for increasing their Numbers. In the *Linen Manufacture*, for Example, a Person may soon learn to gain a Subsistence by the Spinning or Weaving of *coarse Linens* ; and yet the same Person may be several Years, perhaps, before he can gain a Subsistence by the Spinning or Weaving of *fine Linens*. Therefore when a Master Weaver or Manufacturer has a good Vent for *coarse Linens*, he may take in a great Number of Apprentices, and Novices or young Beginners, because they will soon come to be worth the daily Bread he gives them : But if he has no Vent for such *Linens*, every Apprentice or Novice he takes will be a great Expence to him, before he can propose to get any thing by the Labour of such Apprentice or Novice ; and even at last he may be disappointed ; for his Apprentice or Novice may perhaps never be capable of getting his Bread by working in *fine Linens*. This must necessarily prevent the Increase of Workmen in that Way ; and the Scarcity of Workmen will of course make their Wages high ;
for

for the Price of Labour, like other Commodities, must always depend upon the Proportion there is between the Quantity ready to be sold, and the Quantity ready to be purchased.

Another Disadvantage is, that the Manufacturer can make no use of the *Refuse* or *coarsest* Part of his *Flax*, nor of that *coarse Sort of Yarn* or *Linen*, in which young Beginners must be employed; so that in a Country where they have no Vent for *coarse Linens*, it is impossible for their Manufacturers to sell *fine Linens* so cheap, as *such Linens* may be sold in a Country where they have a ready Sale for all the *coarse Linens* they can make. From whence we may see, that the not having a sufficient Vent for *coarse Linens*, must greatly retard the Progress of the *Linen Manufacture* in any Country, by preventing the Number of Workmen from increasing, by keeping up the Wages of those they have, and by necessarily enhancing the Price of all the *fine Linens* they make.

Now, Sir, let us consider, that our *Plantations* is the chief Market we have for *coarse Linens*; which are there made use of, particularly in the Southern Climates, for clothing their *Negroes*. This Market has always hitherto been chiefly supplied with *foreign Linens*. The Reason of which is, because those *Linens* upon Exportation are allowed a Drawback of about 12 *l.* upon every 100 *l.* Value, according to the Price they are sold here at *London*, to those who export them to our *Plantations*; which occasions their being sold in our *Plantations* cheaper than our own *coarse Linens* can be sold. And our *home-made coarse Linens* being thus excluded from every Market in our *Plantations*, there does not remain a sufficient Vent for them here at home: Which is the Reason that many of our *Linen Manufacturers*, particularly in the North of *England*, are obliged to sell the *Refuse* and *coarsest* Part of their *Flax*, to Merchants who export it to *Norway* and *Denmark*. From hence you must see, that the allowing of a Drawback upon fo-

reign Linens when exported to our *Plantations*, has been extremely prejudicial to our *Linen Manufacture*; and that it is absolutely necessary to remove this Obstacle, by taking off that Drawback for the future: For without this Regulation it is hardly possible *our Linen Manufacture* should ever be upon a Level with their *foreign Rivals*. And as this is the first Regulation that was ever asked or proposed, with a View to encourage the *Linen Manufacture of England*, I hope it will not be refused: For I cannot think any *Englishman* will be so envious as to refuse to grant a Favour to his own Countrymen, for no other Reason, but because our Neighbours in *Scotland* and *Ireland* may probably share in the Benefit.

But lest you should think, that this is a Regulation quite new in its Kind, and such a one as was never before proposed or agreed to, I must observe to you, that it is not without Precedent. For by an Act of the second of *Queen Anne*, chap. 9. § 12. no Drawback is to be allowed upon the Exportation of Wares made of *foreign-wrought Iron or Steel* to his Majesty's *Plantations in America*. And by an Act of the ninth of *Queen Anne*, chap. 6. § 55. where *Iron* is imported, and afterwards exported into the *Plantations*, no Drawback is to be allowed for it. Yet both these Sorts of Commodities, when exported to any *foreign independent Country*, are allowed to draw back near the whole Duties paid upon Importation. Thus you see, that with respect to *foreign Iron*, and *Wares made of foreign-wrought Iron or Steel*, we have already, for the sake of encouraging our *home Manufactures of Iron and Steel*, made a Distinction between the Exportation of such Commodities to our *Plantations*, and the Exportation of them to any *foreign independent Country*. And I am sure our *home Manufacture of Linen* deserves as much to be encouraged, as our *home Manufacture of Iron or Steel*, or as any *home Manufacture* whatever.

No Regulation, Sir, can be proposed in Trade, but what must be inconsistent with the private Interest of some particular Men; and therefore the most useful Regulations that ever were proposed, have always, we find, met with Opposition: For few Men can see the public Utility of that which will certainly put an end to, or diminish their private Emolument. Examples of this Kind are so numerous, and so frequent, it would be losing Time to give a particular Account of them. I shall only mention that most useful and necessary Law against *Stockjobbing*, which was so wisely contrived, and, notwithstanding a violent Opposition, so resolutely and so successfully pushed by a worthy Magistrate, who in all his Actions is guided by a generous and true public Spirit, under the Direction of a solid Judgment, and thorough Knowledge in Trade. To this I may add, the late Regulations made in favour of *British* Sail-cloth; and the Law passed but last Session for taking off the Drawback upon the Exportation of *foreign* Paper. Which were all opposed by those who found their private Gains would be lessened by what was proposed for the Benefit of the Public. For the same Reason we may expect this new Regulation in favour of our *Linen* Manufacture will be opposed by many of those concerned in the Importation or Sale of *foreign* Linens; who, by our long and great Consumption of that Commodity, are become a numerous, rich, and formidable Body of Men; but not, I hope, so formidable as to frighten any Man in your Station from doing Justice to his Country.

In all such Cases the true Reasons for the Opposition are most industriously concealed, and some plausible Objections artfully started, in order to impose on weak Minds, and to give a Countenance to the Opposition. This is the Case at present. A *French, Flemish, Dutch, or German* Factor, will not tell us, he opposes this Regulation, because it will lessen the Value of his annual Commissions from abroad. A Wholesale

Linen-

Linen-draper will not tell us, he opposes it, because he can make more by the Sale of *foreign* than of *home-made Linens*; or because he has been always used to the foreign Trade, and cannot now easily alter his Method and Correspondence. Nor will a *Retale-draper* tell us, he opposes it, because of his being afraid lest the Inhabitants of our Cities and Towns, as well as our Country Gentlemen and Farmers, should begin to make *Linens* sufficient for their own Families, or should apply to the *Linen Manufacturers*, instead of applying to the *Linen-drapers* in their Neighbourhood, for what *Linens* they stand in need of: Either of which would very probably happen, if the Manufactures were general, which would of Course very much diminish the Trade and Number of *Retale-drapers*. This is an Effect the *Wholesale*, as well as *Retale Drapers*, have Reason to apprehend from the Success of our *home Manufacture of Linen*. But as both are a Sort of Middle-buyers, or what Mr *Locke* calls Brokers between the Manufacturer and Consumer, it is, according to that great Man's Opinion, inconsistent with the public Good, to encourage their Trade, or increase their Numbers *. These Reasons are carefully kept in that Repository, to which an ingenious Author has long ago told us there are no Windows †. And instead of them, some Reasons of a public Nature are made use of, by way of Objections to what is proposed. Which I shall now proceed to examine: and for that Purpose shall distinguish them into such as are of a *foreign*, and such as are of a *domestic* Nature.

With respect to those that are of a *foreign* Nature, the most general, and the most extraordinary, is, That if it were possible to furnish ourselves with every Thing we want, we ought not to endeavour it; because we could not in that Case have any foreign Trade or Navigation, and consequently no Shipping nor Sailors: From which they conclude, there are several Commo-

* *Locke's* Considerations of the Consequences of lowering of Interest, and raising the Value of Money, p. 17. fol. Edition.

† *Hudibras*.

dities we ought not to endeavour to furnish ourselves with entirely at home; and of these they suppose *Linens* to be one of the chief.

To this I answer, That if we actually did furnish ourselves with every thing; yet we might still have a very great foreign Trade and Navigation, by furnishing other Nations with what they stood in need of from us, or from one another. But it certainly is, and always will be impossible for us, or any Nation, to furnish every thing proper for supplying the Necessaries, Conveniencies, and Luxuries of our People. Therefore we must always have a foreign Trade; and the less we take from Foreigners, the greater Gainers we shall be upon the general Balance of that Trade. For which Reason we ought to endeavour to furnish ourselves with as many Things as possible; but especially those Things that are necessary for the Support of Life, and that tend towards increasing our Riches and Power, by increasing the Numbers of our industrious People. For this End I have shewn there is no Sort of Produce or Manufacture more proper than that of the *Linen*; and therefore we ought to use our utmost Efforts to furnish ourselves with that Commodity.

Their second Objection of the same Kind, is, That when we have an advantageous Trade with any Country, we ought not to risk the Loss of that Trade, by endeavouring to furnish ourselves with a Commodity we formerly had from them: From whence they conclude, we ought not to attempt furnishing ourselves entirely with *Linens* of our own Manufacture, lest we should thereby lose our Trade with *Germany*, which these Gentlemen affirm to be an advantageous Trade to *England*. And upon this Occasion I find, they are at great Pains to put us in mind of the great Quantities of *Woollen*, *Leather*, and *Iron* Manufactures; of *East-India* Goods; of *Rice*, *Ginger*, and *Tobacco*; and, say they, *all* other Commodities of the Growth and Produce of the *British Plantations*,
which

which are yearly exported from hence to *Hamburg*, and other Parts of *Germany*.

Now, Sir, that *Germany* takes great Quantities of Goods from us, must be true, considering the great Extent of that Country, and the Number of its Inhabitants. But surely no Man supposes they do this in Compliment to us. They do it, only because they have those Goods better and cheaper from this Country, than they can have them from any other. While this is the Case, they will continue to do so for their own sake, and without any Regard to the Regulations we may make for the Improvement of our own Manufactures. But as soon as they find they can have any Species of Goods better and cheaper from any other Country, they will give over taking any more of that Species of Goods from us: For in Trade it is ridiculous to expect Friendship. Both Buyer and Seller will go to the best Market; the former to that Market where he can buy cheapest; and the latter to the Market where he expects the highest Price.

Of this we have a melancholy Instance within these last *Ten Years*. For the *French* having, by some wise Regulations, enabled their *Sugar* Planters and Merchants to sell their Sugars cheaper than *British Sugars* can be sold, the *Germans* have (ever since the Year 1730) taken all or most of their *Sugars* from the *French*; though *France* takes none of their *Linens* in Return, and may justly be called the natural and inveterate Enemy of *Germany*. Ever since that Year, which was about the Time the *French* late Regulations began to take Effect, the *Germans* have taken few or none of their *Sugars* from *England*. And therefore it is a very great Mistake to say, that *Germany* takes from *England* ALL other Commodities of the Growth and Produce of the *British Plantations*.

This is the present State of our Trade to *Germany* with respect to *Sugars*, and this may soon be the Case with respect to other Branches. Our exporting *East-India* Goods thither, is, I am afraid, at present in a ticklish

ticklish Situation. The *Germans* have already begun to take great Quantities of *East-India* Goods from *France*: And if they should find they can have such Goods cheaper from the *East-India* Companies lately established in *Sweden* and *Denmark*, they will buy no more of them from us. Then, as to *Woollen* Manufactures, it is certain they have lately set up *Woollen* Manufactures of their own in several Parts of *Germany*; particularly in *Russia*, which now not only furnishes itself, but interferes with us in our *Woollen* Manufacture Trade to *Prussia*. Even at *Altena*, which, though under the Dominion of *Denmark*, may be called one of the Suburbs of *Hamburg*, they have lately set up a *Woollen* Manufacture; which prospers, I am sorry to say it, exceedingly, and is greatly carested and encouraged by the whole Neighbourhood.

From these Observations we may see, what a dangerous State we are in with respect to our Trade with *Germany*; and that it may soon become a losing Trade to *England*, supposing it true that it is at present an advantageous Trade, which these Gentlemen say plainly appears by the Balance of Trade being considerably in our favour. Where they found this Balance, I do not know; for I am sure it was not to be found in *England* for these many Years past. To send us to our Imports and Exports in Search of this Balance, is sending us upon a Wild-goose Chase: For it is hardly possible to bring any such Account to a Balance. And whatever Trust we may put in our Account of *Imports*, we can put no Trust in our Account of *Exports*; because, in making Entries of free Goods for Exportation, Merchants often make larger Entries than they intend to export. For which many Reasons may be assigned; particularly, to give themselves a great Name in Trade; or to make others believe that the foreign Market will be glutted with a Commodity, of which they have sent but a small Quantity, and which by that means they may be able to sell at a high Price; and especially, because in

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making Entries of such Goods, a short Entry may subject them to great Inconveniencies; but from entering a larger Quantity than they export, no Inconvenience can happen, and they may thereby often save themselves the Trouble and Expence of making a new Entry.

But if we may give Credit to the Remarks upon Sir *Isaac Newton's* Tables for calculating the Par of Exchange *, the proper Method for discovering where the Balance resides, is, to consider the Course of Exchange between *England* and *Germany*: For there it is said, *The Course of Exchange with other Countries indicates the State of our Commerce, as truly as the Pulse does that of the human Body*. Upon which Authority I may venture to affirm, from the present Course of Exchange between *London* and *Hamburgh*, that our Commerce with *Germany* is not in a very healthful State or Condition.

These two Cities I chuse as the chief Marts for Bills of Exchange in the two Countries under Consideration; and the Exchange between these two Cities being now, at a Medium, about $33\frac{1}{2}$ *Flemish* Skillings, Bank-money, at two Usances, for One Pound Sterling; by which is meant, that for every Pound Sterling I pay here at *London*, I receive per Bill $33\frac{1}{2}$ *Flemish* Skillings, Bank-money, payable in *Hamburgh* two Months after Date; therefore, if I pay here at *London* 100 l. Sterling, I receive for it a Bill for 3350 *Flemish* Skillings, Bank-money, payable in *Hamburgh* two Months after Date. Now, suppose I make my Payment here at *London* in *English* Crowns, and receive Payment of my Bill at *Hamburgh* in *Rix* Dollars, or *Old-Bank* Dollars, of that City; in order to reckon whether I get or lose by the Exchange, I must compute the Value of the Silver I pay here at *London*, and the Value of the Silver I receive at *Ham-*

* See these Tables at the End of Dr *Arbuthnot's* Tables of ancient Coins, &c. or in a single Sheet since printed by itself, with Remarks and Explanations, printed for R. Willock.

burgh, after having reduced both to the same Standard; which I may easily do by the Tables before mentioned, calculated from Assays made at the Mint by our great Sir *Isaac Newton*, and first published, with his Leave, by the late ingenious Dr *Arbutnot*. For this Purpose I must acquaint you, Sir, that there is an Error of the Press in the Article of the *Old-Bank Dollar* of *Hamburgh*, with respect to the Standard-weight, which ought to be 17 *d. wt.* 17 *gr.* and 3 or 4 *mites*, the exact Weight being 17 *d. wt.* 17 *gr.* 3 *mites*, and near $\frac{742}{10000}$, for the Decimal Fraction is an Infinite of above $\frac{7419}{10000}$ Parts of a *Mite*. And likewise I must acquaint you, that the *Rix* or *Old-Bank Dollar* of *Hamburgh* is equal to 8 *Flemish* Skillings, Bank-money, of that City; and that each *Skilling Flemish*, is equal to 6 *Stivers* of the same Money.

From what I have thus premised, it is easy to see, whether I get or lose by the Exchange: For as there are sixty-two *Shillings Sterling* coined out of every *Pound* of Silver of our present Standard, an Ounce of Silver of the present Standard must be valued at 5 *s.* 2 *d.* and an *English Crown* at 60 *d. Sterling*. Therefore, if I pay 100 *l. Sterling* here at *London* in *English Crowns*, the Value of the Silver I pay here at *London*, according to our present Standard, is exactly 24,000 *d. Sterling*; for which I receive, as above, a Bill for 3350 *Flemish* Skillings, Bank-money, payable in *Hamburgh* two Months after Date. Now, to compute the Value of the Silver I receive at *Hamburgh*, when reduced to the same Standard with what I delivered here at *London*, I shall suppose the Payment is made to me at *Hamburgh* in their *Rix* or *Old-Bank Dollars*; and that for my Bill of 3350 *Flemish* Skillings, Bank-money, of that City, I receive 418 *Dollars* and $\frac{75}{100}$ Parts, or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a *Dollar*; then I look in Sir *Isaac Newton*'s Tables before mentioned, for the Value of an *Old-Bank Dollar* of *Hamburgh* in *Pence Sterling*, which I find to be 54 *d.* and $\frac{92}{100}$ Parts of a *Penny*; and by multiplying

418.75 by 54.92, I find by the Product, which is 22997.75, that for the 24000 *d.* Value of *Sterling* Silver I delivered here at *London*, I receive at *Hamburgh* but 22997 *d.* 3 *q.* Value of Silver of the same Standard; and, lastly, by deducting 22997 *d.* 3 *q.* from 24,000 *d.* I find I have lost by the Exchange 1002 *d.* 1 *q.* or 4 *l.* 3 *s.* 6 *d.* 1 *q.* *Sterling*; to which I must add the Interest of my Money at 5 *per cent.* for two Months, being the Time I lie out of my Money after I have paid it here at *London*, before I receive it back at *Hamburgh*; and as the Interest of 100 *l.* at 5 *per cent.* for that Time, amounts to 16 *s.* 8 *d.* therefore I must conclude, that the Exchange between *London* and *Hamburgh*, is 5 *l.* 2 *d.* 1 *q.* *per cent.* to the Disadvantage of *England*.

By the same Method we may find, that the Exchange between *London* and *Amsterdam*, at two Usances, reckoning 35 *Flemish* Skillings, Bank-money, for a *Pound Sterling*, is above 5 *per cent.* Loss to *England*; that the Exchange between *London* and *Antwerp* is likewise above 5 *per cent.* Loss to *England*; and that we lose above 10 *per cent.* by the Exchange between *London* and *Paris*. From whence we may conclude, that the Balance of Trade is against us, with respect to every one of those Countries from whence we import any considerable Quantities of *Linen*.

I know it may be said, that the Reason why the Course of Exchange between *London* and *Hamburgh* is so much to the Disadvantage of *Britain*, is, because we remit to *Denmark* and *Sweden*, by the Way of *Hamburgh*, all the Money we are obliged to send out for carrying on our Trade with these two Kingdoms, in both which the Balance of Trade is against us. But this, I say, is a Mistake. We may perhaps remit to *Denmark* and *Sweden*, by the Way of *Hamburgh*, some small Part of the Money we are obliged to send thither; but the far greatest Part is remitted by the Way of *Amsterdam*; which is one of the Reasons why we find, almost daily, such great Quantities of Gold
and

and Silver publicly entered for Exportation to *Holland*. For I must here take Notice, that as we allow Bullion and foreign Gold and Silver to be openly exported, the Course of Exchange between *London* and *Holland*, or *Hamburg*, cannot possibly rise above 5 or 6 *per cent.* as long as we have any Bullion or foreign Gold and Silver to export: For the Course of Exchange between two Countries can never rise much above the Value of the Risk and Charges of sending Gold and Silver from the Place where the Bill is drawn to that where it is to be paid.

But as you may not, perhaps, at first comprehend the Truth and Certainty of this Maxim, I must desire you to consider, that if the Remitter be a Person who thoroughly understands Trade, he will not allow, for any Bill, an Exchange much above the Value of the Risk and Charges of sending his Money over in Bullion or foreign Gold and Silver; because if he finds he must pay an Exchange much above this Value, he will, in common Prudence, chuse to remit his Money in Specie, rather than by Bill of Exchange. But as most Remitters are Persons who do not understand thoroughly the Method of exporting Bullion or foreign Gold and Silver, therefore they are willing to allow a Profit, over and above the Value of the Risk and Charges, to those who understand and deal in exporting Bullion or foreign Gold and Silver from this Country to any other. And whenever this Profit rises so high as to be sufficient to answer the Merchants Trouble in drawing, and their Risk and Charges in letting their Money lie in foreign Correspondents Hands, till they find an Opportunity to draw for it, we may depend on it, that those who deal in this Way, will export Gold and Silver in Specie, in order to get a Profit by drawing or selling Bills of Exchange. Now, the Value of the Risk and Charges of exporting Bullion or foreign Gold and Silver from *Britain* to *Holland*, *Hamburg*, or *Flanders*, may, I reckon, be about two or three *per cent.*; and the Profit sufficient for

for answering the Merchant's Trouble in drawing, and his Risk and Charges in letting his Money lie in a foreign Correspondent's Hand, till he finds an Opportunity to draw for it, may, I believe, be about two or three *per cent.* more: Therefore the Exchange between *London* and either of these Countries, can never be above five or six *per cent.* This is confirmed by Experience; for we find the Exchange between *London* and either of these Places, seldom or ever rises above five or six *per cent.*

With respect to *France*, indeed, the Value of the Risk and Charges of sending Gold and Silver to *Paris*, which is the chief Staple of *France* for Bills of Exchange, is much greater; because of the Land-carriage from any of the Ports of that Kingdom to *Paris*, and because of the Uncertainty of sending it when there is the greatest Occasion for it. These are the true Reasons for the Course of Exchange between *London* and *Paris*, generally being about ten *per cent.* to our Disadvantage. But since a weekly Correspondence, by Shipping or Sloops, has been opened between *London*, and *Dunkirk*, *Calais*, or *Boulogne*, we find several Quantities of Gold and Silver have been entered for Exportation to *France*, which may lower the Course of Exchange in our favour, or at least prevent it from rising to our Disadvantage, without diminishing in the least our Loss upon the Balance of our Trade with *France*.

From these Considerations it is, I think, evident, that the Course of Exchange can never rise much above the Value of the Risk and Charges of sending Gold or Silver to the Place where the Bill is to be paid. Therefore, if the Course of Exchange between this Country and any other be against us, it may be allowed to be almost a certain Indication, that the Balance of Trade is against us. But it cannot be allowed to be a certain Indication of the *Quantum* of that Balance; because, as I have shewn, whenever the Course of Exchange rises much above the Value of the Risk and

and Charges of exporting Gold and Silver, such Quantities of these two Metals will be exported, as must soon bring the Exchange back to its natural Course. To determine the exact *Quantum* of this Balance is, I believe, impossible, unless our Accounts of Import and Export were much more truly and regularly kept, at every one of our Ports, than they can be by the Laws now in being. It is sufficient for my present Purpose to shew that the Balance of Trade is against us : And this, I think, I have clearly shewn, from the Course of Exchange, with respect to every Country from whence we import any great Quantities of Linen.

For this Reason, Sir, I have no Dependence upon the Account you sent me of the Value of Imports and Exports between this and *Germany*. And indeed I must say, I put less Faith in that Account, than in any I ever saw from our Customhouse. How that Account was made up, or how the Value was put upon our Imports and Exports, I do not know : But from an Account of *foreign Linens* imported from the Year 1728 to the Year 1734 *inclusive*, which I have seen, and which I am assured is a true and genuine Account, the Article of *broad and narrow German Linens* alone amounts to 20,746,872 Yards, at a Medium, yearly ; which at a *Shilling a-yard* is 1,037,343 *l. Sterling* yearly, and 1,037,343 *l.* for twelve Years amounts to 12,448,104 *l. Sterling* ; which is about *four Millions* more than the Value of all our Imports from *Germany* for that Interval of Time, according to the Account you have sent me.

I have therefore great Reason to suppose there is some Mistake in this Account, either as to the Quantities of Goods imported, or as to the Value put upon them. And as to the Exports, there can be no Dependence upon any such Account, for the Reasons I have already assigned. But supposing this were a true and exact Account, the Nation can be supposed to gain but a little more than 400,000 *l.* yearly. And as a great Part of our Exports consists in *East-India* Goods,

Goods, upon which the Nation does not, on a Medium, now gain above 25 *per Cent.*; therefore, even by this Account, the Nation cannot be supposed to gain yearly near 400,000 *l.*; which is a trifling Sum when compared with the vast Gains the Nation might reap by a due Encouragement of our *home Manufacture of Linnen.*

But to pretend, Sir, that the greatest Advantage we can have by our Trade with any foreign Country whatever, should make us neglect improving any Produce or Manufacture amongst ourselves, especially such a necessary and useful Manufacture as that of the *Linnen*, is most ridiculous. When we may be furnished with the same sort of Commodity from two different Countries, good Policy will direct us to take it from that Country by whose Trade we are the greatest Gainers. But surely our own People are to be preferred to both. If this had been looked upon as a Maxim in Queen *Elisabeth's* Reign, we should never have had any Sugar or Tobacco Plantations in *America*. We were then furnished with our Sugars and Tobacco from *Spain* and *Portugal*; our Trade with *Spain* and *Portugal* was an advantageous Trade; therefore, according to this modern Maxim, we ought not to have attempted to furnish ourselves with Sugars or Tobacco, lest it should have made us lose the advantageous Trade we then had with *Spain* and *Portugal*. But, luckily for us, that *Great Queen* judged better; therefore she encouraged as much as she could our Settlements in *America*, and by that means laid the Foundation of what is now the chief Support of our Riches and Power.

From hence it appears, that our being Gainers in our Trade with any Country, was not, in the Days of Queen *Elisabeth*, thought a good Reason for our neglecting to encourage the Trade or Manufactures of our own People. And that it is thought no good Reason, in any Part of the World, or among any Set of Men, except our *British* Dealers in *foreign Linens*,
will

will appear from the late Conduct of *Sweden* and *Denmark*. Both these Countries are allowed to be great Gainers in their Trade with *Britain*; yet both have lately begun to rival us in our *East-India* Trade, and have greatly encouraged their Subjects to do so, notwithstanding the strongest Representations we could make against it. Nay, *Denmark* has lately begun to rival us in our *Woollen* Manufacture: For the Government of *Denmark* has lately made several public Regulations for encouraging their *home* Manufacture of *Wool-lens*, some of which we ought to imitate; particularly that of paying a Part of all their public Pensions and Salaries in *Woollen* Goods of their *own* Manufacture: For I cannot think it would be any Grievance or Loss to this Nation, if all our Placemen and Pensioners, Ecclesiastical, Civil, and Military, were obliged to take *five* or *ten per Cent.* of their Salaries and Pensions in *Wool-lens* and *Linens* of our *own* Manufacture. As they are the most fashionable Gentlemen of the Kingdom, there is nothing would contribute more towards rooting out that Custom or Fashion of wearing *foreign Linens*, which has so long prevailed amongst us, and which I have shewn to be of such pernicious Consequence to our *home* Manufacture of that Commodity.

But, say these Gentlemen, if you take no *Linens* from *Germany*, they can take none of your Goods or Manufactures, because they will have nothing to give you in Return.

We take *Linens* from *France* and *Holland*, as well as *Germany*. As to *France* and *Holland*, I hope no Gentleman will pretend, that either of them would have nothing to send us in Return, though we should take none of their *Linens*. But even with respect to *Germany*, this must appear to be a Mistake, from what I have already said. I have shewn, that at present we probably are, and from the same Method of Reasoning it will appear we have for many Years been, great Losers by our Trade with *Germany*:

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Therefore

Therefore we may presume they have drawn great Quantities of Gold and Silver from us yearly. If we should begin to take none of their *Linens*, the Balance of Trade may perhaps turn in our favour: And if it should, we shall then begin to draw back yearly a Part of that Gold and Silver which we have been for so long sending to them. Their People might, it is true, by this means grow poorer; and consequently might be obliged to contract their Expence. But that Saving would not affect us; it would affect those only who furnish them with the Luxuries of Life. What we furnish them with, are the Necessaries or the Conveniencies of Life only. They might not perhaps be able to purchase so great Quantities of *French Wines* and *Silks*, *Italian Essences*, or *East-India Spices*; but they would still be able to purchase *Yorkshire Drabs*, *Norwich Stuffs*, *Birmingham* and *Sheffield Wares*, *Rice*, *Ginger*, *Tobacco*, &c.; and would then send that Money to *Britain* yearly for Necessaries and Conveniencies, which they now send to *France*, *Italy*, and *Holland*, for Luxuries.

It is from hence more than probable, that if we did not take a Yard of Linen from *Germany*, they would take as much from us as they do at present, and would continue to do so, as long as they found they could not have such Goods so cheap from any other Place.

Thus that frightful Argument, That the present Question, if agreed to, would greatly diminish our *Woollen* Manufacture, must entirely vanish. This Argument, I know, is as frequently repeated, and as strongly urged, as it is artfully insinuated. But from what I have said, I think it will appear, we have no Reason to apprehend, that any of the Countries we deal with for *Linens*, will ever want something to give us in Return for our *Woollen* Manufactures. This is not the Danger. Our only Danger is, left by taking such Quantities of *Linen* from them, and sending them such Quantities of Gold and Silver yearly,

yearly, we at last render them so rich, as to enable them to set up *Woollen* Manufactures of their own: And this they will certainly do, as soon as it is in their Power, whether we take any *Linens* from them or no. With respect to most Parts of the World, it may be said, we are still in Possession of the *Woollen* Manufacture. It cannot be taken from us by any Nation that has not a great deal of Money to bestow upon encouraging such a Manufacture among themselves. If we furnish them with the Money necessary for that Purpose, by taking their *Linens* to the Discouragement of *our own* Manufacture, they will then put the As's Ears upon us; they will lay high Duties upon, or prohibit the Importation of our *Woollen* Manufactures, and tell us, we may do the same by their *Linens* if we please; because by our Poverty it may then very probably be impossible for us to rival them in that Manufacture.

By the present Regulation, therefore, we can be no Losers, but may probably be infinite Gainers. For if the whole 32 *Millions* of Yards of *Linen* we now take from Foreigners yearly, were manufactured in our own Dominions, it would employ at least 160,000 *Spinners*, supposing that each *Spinner* could spin, one with another, 10 *Cuts* of Yarn a-day, or 3000 *Cuts*, making 250 *Dozen*, in a Year, allowing 12 Holidays, besides *Sundays*; which I reckon would be Yarn sufficient for making 200 Yards of a middling sort of *Linen*, of about a *Shilling* a-yard. Then suppose the cultivating, managing, and heckling the *Hemp* and *Flax* necessary for the making this Quantity of *Linen*, and the weaving, bleaching, and dressing it, would give constant Employment to 80,000 more of our People; we should have 240,000 more People constantly employed than we have at present. These 240,000 constantly at Work, would, I reckon, support at least 12,000 Masters and Mistresses. Which makes in all 252,000 Persons usefully employed more than we have at present. Now, we cannot suppose that each of these

252,000 Persons would consume less than 40 *s. worth* of our *Woollen* and *Leather* Manufactures yearly, one with another. This would be a new Consumption of these Manufactures to the Amount of 504,000 *l. Sterling* yearly; which would of itself be sufficient to give a new Spirit to both, especially our *Woollen* Manufacture. And the providing Victuals and Drink for this additional Number of People, would maintain a great Number of more Hands in *Agriculture*, &c.: For we may suppose, that each Person would consume in Victuals and Drink to the Value of 2 *d.* a-day, one with another; which is 766,500 *l. Sterling* a-year.

Then, with respect to the public Revenue, considering our Customs, our Excises, our Malt-tax, our Salt-duty, our Stamp-duties, &c. we may, I believe, suppose, that each Person of this additional Number would pay in Taxes to the Public, 10 *s.* yearly, one with another; which would be an Addition of 126,000 *l. per Annum* to the public Revenue. But as you, Sir, as well as some other Gentlemen, may think this Calculation too large, I shall beg Leave to confirm it from the public Accounts delivered in to the last Session of Parliament. As Accounts were then delivered of the gross and net Produce of the several Branches of the public Revenue *appropriated to the Payment of our public Debts*, I shall give you the annual net Produce of the several Accounts at a Medium, for the Years respectively mentioned, as follows, *viz.*

The net Produce of the several Branches
of Excise, at a Medium, from 1732 to } 1,702,231
1736 *inclusive*

The net Produce of the several Branches
of Customs, at a Medium, for the same } 1,028,200
time

The net Produce of the Salt-duty, at a }
Medium, from 1734 to 1737 *inclu-* } 186,238
sive

The net Produce of the Duties on }
Houses, at a Medium, from 1733 to } 126,110
1737 *inclusive*

The net Produce of the following Du-
ties, at a Medium, from 1732 to 1736,
viz.

The Stamp-duties — — — 118,509

A Part of the Post-office Duties, *appro-* } 36,540
priated as above mentioned

The Duty on Coaches and Chairs 7,841

The Duty on Hawkers and Pedlars 7,349

The Duty on Money with Clerks and Ap- } 5,120
prentices

3,218,148

To this we must add the Civil List Re- } 800,000
venue, which is *per annum*

And the Malt-tax, which is *per annum* 700,000

1,500,000

It may perhaps be said, that the net Produce of the Malt-tax does not amount to 700,000 *l. per annum*; but if there be any Deficiency in this Article, I am convinced it will be made good by the Excess of the Revenues appropriated to the Civil List. And therefore we must conclude, that the whole annual Amount
of

of our public Revenue, without including the Land-tax, is 4,718,148 *l. per annum*; which being divided by 10 *Millions*, the supposed Number of People in *Great Britain*, Infants included, makes near 9 *s. 6 d.* to be paid by each Person, one with another. From whence we must reckon, that every adult Person, one with another, contributes at least 10 *s. per annum* to our public Revenue.

Thus, Sir, I have given you a short Sketch of the Advantages the Nation would reap by the additional Number of industrious People; which would be the certain Consequence of our having the *Linen* manufactured among ourselves we now purchase from Foreigners. But these are not all: This additional Number of 252,000 *Linen* Manufacturers, with the Addition which by their means would be made to the Number of our *Woollen* Manufacturers, Servants for Agriculture, &c.; which, taking them all together, I shall reckon 300,000, would consume 1,875,000 Yards of *Linen* yearly; the Manufacture of which would make a new Addition of about 14,000 *Linen* Manufacturers; and these again would occasion a further Increase of our *Woollen* and *Leather* Manufacture, and of our Agriculture. So that the Increase of the public Revenue by this means, we may reckon, would amount to at least 150,000 *l. Sterling per annum*. And as a great Part of this Sum would accrue to the Sinking Fund, it would enable us to pay off our Debts much sooner than we can otherwise do.

The third Objection of a *foreign* Nature is, That the Regulation now proposed, may excite *foreign* Princes and States to retaliate, by laying excessive Duties, and perhaps Prohibitions, upon the *Manufactures* of this Kingdom.

As to those *British* Manufactures which any of our Neighbours can furnish themselves with by the Labour and Industry of their own People, they have already laid Duties upon them, in order to encourage their own; nor can we blame them for so doing, no more than

than they can blame us for laying Duties upon their *Linens*, in order to encourage *our own* Manufacture of that Commodity. But as to those Manufactures which they cannot furnish themselves with by the Labour and Industry of their own People, they must have them from us, or from some body else. Therefore, if they lay any Duty upon such Manufactures, from whencesoever imported, it will be only laying a Tax upon their own People; it can do us little or no Prejudice. And by the Treaties subsisting between us, they cannot lay a Tax upon any Manufacture of *Britain* in particular; because by those Treaties they are obliged to shew as much Favour and Friendship to us as to any other *foreign* Nation: So that the attempting of any such thing would be a Breach of all Friendship, Trade, and Correspondence between us. And as every one of those Nations from whom we take *Linens*, get more than we do by our present mutual Commerce, we cannot suppose they would act in such a childish Manner as to do an Injury to themselves, in order to be revenged of us.

But I would gladly ask those Gentlemen, whether they think that the Consumption of *foreign Linens* in our *Plantations*, is of more Consequence to the foreign Nations from whom we take that Commodity, than the Consumption in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*? For if the latter be of greater Consequence than the former, surely the foreign Nations we deal with in *Linens*, had more Reason to be displeased with us, and to retaliate, when we laid the present Duties upon all their *Linens* consumed in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, than they can now have, on account of our extending those Duties to such of their *Linens* as shall be hereafter consumed in our *Plantations*; and since they did not at that Time think proper to attempt any violent Measures against us, we can have no Ground to apprehend a different Conduct upon the present Occasion.

The fourth Objection of a *foreign* Nature is, That in sorting Cargoes for most Parts of the World we
deal

deal with, we are obliged to put almost in every one a large Quantity of *foreign Linens*; because at such Markets we cannot sell our *home-made Linens* so cheap as *foreign Linens* are there sold. Now, say they, if we allow no Drawback upon the Exportation of *foreign Linens*, our Merchants must either continue to export *such Linens*, or they must give it quite over. If they continue to export *such Linens*, it will be impossible to sell them without a Loss at any foreign Market; and as our Merchants must charge that Loss upon the Price of *our own* Manufactures they carry thither, this Supercharge will very much injure the Sale of our home Manufactures at all foreign Markets; which will be a great Prejudice both to our Trade and Manufactures. On the other hand, if our Merchants give over all Thoughts of importing or exporting any *foreign Linens*, it will not only lay them under great Difficulties with respect to sorting their Cargoes for foreign Markets, but it will likewise diminish our Transport-trade, and consequently our Navigation. This, they say, was wisely foreseen when these Duties were laid on; and therefore it was then ordered, that all of them, but the Half of the old Subsidy, should be drawn back upon Exportation.

Now, Sir, with respect to this Objection, we must distinguish between those Parts beyond Seas, where no *foreign Linens* can arrive but by means of passing through *Britain*, and those Parts where *foreign Linens* may arrive, whether we will or not, without any such Passage. With respect to the former, I do not think it was very wise, not to allow the whole Duties to be drawn back upon exporting *foreign Linens* to such Markets. Our Error in this respect has long ago laid our Merchants under a Necessity to sort all their Cargoes for such Markets, without any great Quantity of *such Linens*; as appears from the small Quantities we find exported to any such Market. And as I am far from contending, that the Drawbacks should be taken off, with respect to *foreign Linens* exported,

exported to such Markets, the Objection can be of no Weight, with regard to what I contend for; which relates only to *foreign Linens* transported to those Places beyond the Seas, where no *foreign Linens* can or ever could arrive, but by means of passing through *Britain*. And with respect to all such Places, we certainly ought not to have allowed any Part of the Duties to be drawn back upon the *foreign Linens* exported to any such Place; and certainly would not, if we had had any View, by laying on such Duties, to have given Encouragement to our *home* Manufacture of *Linen*. I know it is said, That if we had not allowed any Drawbacks upon *Linen* exported to our *Plantations*, we could not have carried on such a profitable clandestine Trade with the *Spanish* Settlements in *America*, as we have done for many Years. But as we have now no such Trade; as every one knows we put an entire Stop to it by the Peace of *Utrecht*, and the Establishment of the *South-Sea* Company, at least as much as lay in our Power; therefore I am sure, our Smuggling-trade with the *Spanish* Settlements in *America* can now be of no Weight in any of our Consultations about Trade. And if the *South-Sea* Company should ever again send an annual Ship to *New Spain*, and should think proper to export *foreign Linens* thither, they might be allowed a Drawback, in the same manner as is, or ought to be allowed upon *foreign Linens* exported to Places where we have no Power or Influence.

Thus, Sir, you see, that, by making this proper and necessary Distinction, between *foreign Linens* exported to Places where they may be sold without passing through *Britain*, and *foreign Linens* exported to Places where they cannot possibly be sold without such a Passage, we may contribute greatly to the Encouragement of our *Linen Manufacture*, without so much as running a Risk of injuring any other Branch of our Trade. And as to our Navigation, it appears, that it cannot be injured in any Part, but solely in that which is employed in importing those *foreign Linens* that

are now sent to, and consumed in our *Plantations*. As to which I must observe, that the greatest Part of the *foreign Linens* sent to our *Plantations*, are imported in *Hamburg* Ships, which are foreign, and entirely navigated by foreign Sailors; so that our own Navigation appears not to have the least Concern in the present Question.

Having now stated, and, I think, fully answered all the material Objections of a *foreign* Nature, which I have heard made use of against the Regulation proposed; I shall next consider those Objections that are of a *domestic* Nature; some of which relate to *Britain* and the *Plantations* jointly, and others to the *Plantations* only.

As to the former, the first I shall take notice of is, That we neither do nor can make the Qualities or Kinds, and the Quantities of *Linen* we stand in need of, for want of Skill and Materials, and for want of spare Hands.

To which I answer, That as to the Qualities or Kinds of the *Linen* we stand in need of, there may be some sorts of *foreign Linen* a little different from any of those we make; but with respect to the Uses to which *Linen*s are commonly applied, there is no Use to which any sort of *foreign Linen* is or can be applied, but may be fully as well answered by some of the sorts of *Linen* we already make: And if there is any sort of *foreign Linen* which is not perfectly imitated by some one or other of our *home* Manufactures, it is that of the coarsest sort, which is mostly sent to our *Plantation* Market. So that it is not for want of Skill, but for want of a Vent, that we do not make every sort of *Linen* that comes from abroad. And for the same Reason it is, that our *Linen Manufacturers*, particularly of *Yorkshire*, the *Bishoprick*, and the County of *Northumberland*, are obliged to sell their *Bags*, or the *Refuse* of their *Hemp* and *Flax*, for little or nothing, to those that export it; for it is of this Material only
those

those *coarse foreign Linens* we do not exactly imitate, are manufactured

It is a Fact notoriously known, that we now can make as fine *Linens*, and as good in every respect, as any that are made beyond Sea. And surely those who have Skill enough to manufacture *Linens* of the finest and best Sort, cannot be said to want Skill sufficient for manufacturing those of the coarsest. But granting it were otherwise, may not our Manufacturers soon acquire more Skill than they have at present, if we take proper Care to encourage their Progress in that sort of Knowledge? Can it be said, that the Genius or Capacity of our People is inferior to the Genius and Capacity of any People under the Sun? As our People are generally richer than most others, we may not perhaps have so many Projectors amongst us; for Poverty is said to be the Mother of Invention: And this is the true Reason why we are not so good at Invention as some of our Neighbours. But it is a common Observation, that in all Arts and Sciences we improve upon the Inventions of others.

From hence, Sir, we must conclude, our want of Skill can be no Bar to the Regulation proposed. And as to our want of Materials, our Soil and Climate in *Britain and Ireland* are certainly as proper for producing *Hemp* and *Flax*, as the Soil and Climate of any Country upon the Face of the Earth. Then considering the small Encouragement we now have for Grasing, and the yet smaller Encouragement we should have had for producing Wheat, or any sort of Corn, if it had not been for the accidental Demand for that sort of Commodity in *foreign* Parts, which to our great Good-luck has now continued above *three Years*, I may say, we have spare Lands enough in *Britain and Ireland* for producing *Hemp* and *Flax*; and till our People at *home* fall into a way of producing *Hemp* and *Flax* sufficient for our *Linen Manufacture*, we may supply the Deficiency by importing *Hemp* and *Flax* unmanufactured from those Countries from whence we now

import those Materials brought to their utmost Perfection by Manufacture. The Difference in the Expence would be very inconsiderable, and the Manufacture would give Employment and Happiness to a great Multitude of *our own* People, instead of giving Employment and Happiness to Multitudes of *Foreigners*, who may one Day be our *declared Enemies*.

Then as to the want of spare Hands, I am surprised to hear such an Objection made by any Man, who considers the present extravagant Height of our Poor's Rates, and the Multitudes of Poor who have lately transported themselves to our *Plantations*. But suppose we had not at present a Sufficiency of spare Hands, does not every one know, that the People of a Country always increase both by Generation, and by the Accession of Foreigners, in proportion as the Trade and Manufactures of that Country increase? When Multitudes of Poor are starving for want of Employment, it frightens most of them from marrying; and instead of inviting Foreigners to come and settle among you, it forces many of your Poor to go seek for Employment in foreign Countries. Whereas, when there is a great Demand for Labour, when all the Poor have sufficient Employment, and every one is able to get a comfortable Subsistence by Industry, their natural Inclinations, which are heightened by Plenty and Satisfaction, prompt them to marry and beget Children; and the Happiness of your People being made the common Topic of Discourse among all your Neighbours, it tempts many industrious and skilful Foreigners to come and settle among you.

This shews we could not be long in want of Hands for manufacturing all the *Linen* we now take from Foreigners. And the Manufacture of *Linens*, especially those of the coarser sort, has this Advantage, that the People of both Sexes, and almost of all Ages, may soon learn to gain a Subsistence by their Labour; the most ignorant may be soon taught to be useful; Children may earn their Bread; and the Decrepit may support

support themselves by their Industry. There are but very few of those Persons who are now supported by the Parish, but might soon learn, and might be able to support themselves, by working in some Branch of the *Linen Manufacture*. So that I am apt to believe we should stand in need of but a very few additional Hands for manufacturing all the *Linen* we stand in need of, either for our *home* or *Plantation* Consumption. I have already computed, the manufacturing the 32 Millions of Yards of *Linen* we now take from Foreigners yearly, would employ but 300,000 Persons more than we have already employed: And as we have in *Britain* and *Ireland* about 13,000 Parishes, this is but about 23 Persons to every Parish. Therefore, considering we have in every Parish many poor Persons who have not constant Employment, besides those that are supported by the Parish, it may be supposed we should not stand in need of any very great additional Number of Hands, if all the idle and useless People we now have, were properly employed; which they might be by a due Encouragement of our *Linen Manufacture*.

But, lastly, Suppose we have not, nor could have for several Years, sufficient Skill, or a sufficient Quantity of Materials, or a sufficient Number of spare Hands, for manufacturing the several Kinds and Quantities of *Linen* we stand in need of; what would be the Consequence? It is not now proposed to prohibit the Importation or Exportation of *foreign Linens*; nor is it proposed to lay any additional Duty on *foreign Linens* consumed at home: It is only proposed, that the People in our own *Plantations*, and Settlements beyond Sea, shall hereafter pay an equal Duty upon the *foreign Linens* they consume, with that which is paid upon *foreign Linens* consumed by our own People here at home. The only Consequence of which is, that the Deficiency in our own Manufacture will be supplied by *foreign Linens*, till we can have Skill, Materials, and spare Hands enough, for supplying ourselves:

ourselves: And the only Disadvantage is, that our People in the *Plantations* may perhaps, for a Year or two, pay a little dearer for the *Linens* they consume than they do at present. From all which I must be of Opinion, that with proper Encouragement we may be able in a few Years, without subjecting ourselves in the mean time to any Inconvenience, to make all the Quantities and Kinds of *Linen* we stand in need of. And to say, that because we do not at present make all the Quantities and Kinds of *Linen* wanted, therefore we ought not to endeavour to enable our People to do so in Time to come, seems to me ridiculous.

The second Objection of a *domestic* Nature that relates to *Britain* and the *Plantations* jointly, is, That our *Linen Manufacturers* ought to supply our *home* Market, before they ask an Encouragement for enabling them to supply any Market *beyond Sea*: For, say these Gentlemen, it would be needless to encourage our *Linen Manufacturers* to export their *Linen*, while we are obliged to import *foreign Linens* for our *home* Consumption.

In Answer to this, we must distinguish between the *home Demand* for *Linens* of our own Manufacture, and the *home Consumption* of all sorts of *Linens*; for the former is not near so great as the latter, for several Reasons; two of which I shall presently explain. That we do make a Quantity of *Linens* sufficient to answer the *home Demand* for such *Linens*, is evident; because we now sell all sorts of *home-made Linens* cheaper than *foreign Linens* of the same Fineness and Goodness can be sold in *Britain* or *Ireland*. And it would be ridiculous to suppose our *Linen Manufacturers* ought, or can, or ever will make a much greater Quantity than they find sufficient for answering *this Demand*: For if they should at any time make more than a sufficient Quantity for this Purpose, the *Linens* must either lie upon their Hands, or they must sell them at a losing Price; which would certainly oblige them to con-

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tract their Manufacture for some time after. This is the Case at present. They have for some time past made a greater Quantity than is sufficient for answering *this Demand*; so that considerable Quantities of good *home-made Linens* of all sorts are now lying upon the Hands of the Manufacturers and Merchants, some of which have lain by them above *three Years*. Therefore, unless some new Vent be opened, they must contract their Manufacture for Years to come; which will reduce Numbers of our Manufacturers and Weavers to a starving Condition, or oblige them to betake themselves to other Business, or to transport themselves beyond Seas.

As I have said, and as the Fact certainly is, That *home-made Linens* are now sold cheaper than *foreign Linens* of the same Fineness and Goodness can be sold in *Great Britain* or *Ireland*, one may be surpris'd to hear, that any *foreign Linens* are, or can be now sold for *home* Consumption. But such is the Prevalency of Custom, that Numbers of our People still chuse to wear *foreign Linens*, though they can have *home-made Linens* of equal Goodness and Fineness at a cheaper Rate. The Reason of which is, that they have been long accustomed to think *foreign Linens* are better and cheaper than those of *our own* Manufacture; and but few of the Consumers have a sufficient Knowledge in *Linen* to discover this Mistake or Prejudice. This is so true, that our Retail-draper's are often obliged to make the *home-made Linens* they have in their Shops, pass under the Name of *foreign* to their Customers. And in the *Spanish West-Indies*, where some of our *home-made Linens* were sent for Sale some Years ago, it was found, that nobody would meddle with them, because they did not seem to be such as they had been accustomed to. But of late our Merchants have contriv'd to have those *Linens* done up in the same Manner with the *foreign Linens* of the same sort which those People were accustomed to; and, by so doing, they have not only found a Market for several

ral Quantities of them, but find, that the People are extremely pleased, and have, upon Trial, formed a very good Opinion of them.

This Prevalency of Custom is one Reason why the *home Demand* for *Linens* of *our own* Manufacture is not so great as the *home Consumption* of all sorts of *Linens*. And the only other I shall take notice of, is, the Artifices of those whose private Interest it is to encourage the Consumption of *foreign Linens*, rather than that of *our own* Manufacture.

That there are such Men in the Kingdom, no one can doubt, who considers what vast Quantities of *foreign Linens* we have annually consumed for so many Years, and what Numbers of our Merchants and Linen-drapers must be engaged in the Importation and Sale of *such Linens*. We have many *Factors* who have every Year great Quantities of *foreign Linens* consigned to them by their Correspondents in *France, Flanders, Holland, and Germany*. Upon these they receive great Profits by the Commission; and the more they can dispose of, the more will be consigned to them, the more Commissions they will be intitled to. Such Men cannot easily fall into the *home Linen Trade*, because they have no Correspondence or Acquaintance with the *Linen Manufacturers*, or Merchants of *Great Britain or Ireland*. Therefore, as the *Linen Manufacture* of their Country increases, their Trade, and consequently their Profits, must necessarily decrease; and for this Reason we may presume many of them will always encourage the Consumption of *foreign Linens*, and will oppose any public Measure that may be thought of for encouraging *our own* Manufacture.

But these are not the only Men who by their private Interest may be induced to encourage the Consumption of *foreign Linens*; for to them we must add our great *Wholesale Linen-drapers*. As all *foreign Linens* are made up in very large Packages,
each

each of which contains a Variety of Sortments, the Factor or Importer cannot sell any small Parcel; he must sell a whole Package at once, otherwise he would be obliged to keep a Shop as well as a Warehouse. And as a Package of such Linens contains so great a Quantity, and such a Variety, no Man but a *Wholesale-drafter* can be his Customer. By which means the *Wholesale-drapers* are become a sort of necessary intermediate Dealers between the *Importers* and *Retail-drapers*; so that the *Retail-drapers* must apply to them, and them only, for what *Linens* they want in the Retail way. Whereas the *British* and *Irish Linens* are made up in small Packages, and in such a Manner that they may be sold in small Parcels by the Merchant, *Factor* or *Importer*; so that the *Retail-drafter* may go directly to the Factor, and may purchase what Quantities of *Linens* he wants in his Retail-trade, without being under a Necessity of applying to any *Wholesale-drafter* whatever. Thus you see, Sir, the *Wholesale-drapers* have, with respect to *foreign Linens*, a Monopoly of the Retail-trade; but with respect to *home-made Linens*, they have no such Monopoly; and therefore it is their Interest to encourage the Sale and Consumption of the former preferably to that of the latter.

But this is not all: The *Wholesale-drapers* have not only a Monopoly of the Retail-trade, but they have likewise, in some measure, a Monopoly of the Export-trade, with respect to *foreign Linens*: For though an Exporter is obliged to send out great Variety of Sortments; yet those Sortments are very different from what are to be found in any one Package of *foreign Linens*; therefore he cannot purchase a whole Package of *foreign Linens*, but must apply to the *Wholesale-drapers*, and to them only, for making up his Cargo for Export. And here the *Wholesale-drafter* has a double Advantage: For he has not only a Monopoly in the Trade, but he generally receives an Advantage by means of the Draw-

back. It is therefore very much the Interest of the *Wholesale Linen-drappers*, to encourage the Consumption of *foreign Linens*, both at *home* and in the *Plantations*. For which Reason we may presume many of them will endeavour to raise an Outcry against any Measure that can be proposed for encouraging the *Linen Manufacture* of their *native Country*; and the *Retail-drappers*, for the Reasons before mentioned, will certainly join in that Outcry.

After having thus pointed out the several sorts of Men who may be induced by their private Interest to discourage the Consumption of *home-made Linens*, I believe I need not give an Account of the various Artifices they make use of. However, one has been so generally and successfully practised, that I cannot forbear mentioning it. Since our late Improvements in the Manufacture of *Linen*, they have not had the Assurance to say but that a Piece of *home-made Linen* looks as well as a Piece of *foreign Linen* of the same Price. This any one who has the least Judgment in *Linen*, and will be at the Pains to compare them together, must be sensible of. But they say, our *home-made Linens*, it is true, look as well in the Shop as *foreign*, but they all spoil and grow yellow with washing. To which they generally add, that the *foreign* will last twice as long as our *home-made Linens*. These are Facts which cannot be contradicted but by Experience: And most Consumers rather chuse to believe the *Draper*, than to run the Risk of making the Experiment. This is an Artifice which every one knows has been long made use of, and has too much prevailed; but, thank God! it now begins to lose its Effect. And whatever may be the Issue of this Application, I believe it will be attended with this Advantage, that it will open the Eyes of some of our *home* Consumers, and thereby contribute towards removing that general Prejudice which has so long prevailed in favour of *foreign Linens*. For with respect to our *home* Consumption, if we were free from

from the Duties on *Soap*, and other Materials necessary for the Manufacture of *Linen*, our Manufacturers would desire nothing but a strict Inquiry, and an impartial Judgment. But even this they cannot propose to obtain for many Years, unless they are enabled to sell their *fine Linens* cheaper than they can do at present, by procuring them a sufficient Vent for all the *coarse Linens* they can make. If they had such a Vent, they might probably in a few Years be able to sell their *fine Linens* so much cheaper than *foreign*, that no Man could fail observing the Difference. And if the better Sort of our People should once get over this old Prejudice, the inferior would soon follow their Example; so that our *home Demand* for *Linens* of our own Manufacture, and our *home Consumption* of *Linens* of all Sorts, might come to be nearly the same; and at last we might come to be able to furnish our Neighbours, instead of being furnished by them.

Before I have done with this Objection I must observe, it is so far from being needless to encourage the Export of any *home* Manufacture, as long as we are obliged to import a *foreign* Manufacture of the same Kind for our *home* Consumption, that where-ever this can be done, it ought to be done; because if our Necessity for importing proceeds from its being impossible for our Manufacturers to furnish the Quantities or Qualities necessary both for the *foreign Demand* and *home Consumption*, they will be certainly every Day improving in Skill, and in Numbers of Workmen, in order to be able to answer both these Demands; so that our Manufacture will be in a continual State of increasing, till it becomes sufficient for answering both. And if our Necessity for importing proceeds from the Fashion and Whim of our People, which makes them give a Preference to *foreign* Manufactures, the Quantity exported is so much got to the Nation, by increasing our own Manufacture: For our Imports would be as great, even though we should not export

one Shilling's worth of our own Manufacture. In either Case, therefore, we ought to encourage the exporting our *home Manufactures*, notwithstanding our being annually obliged to import great Quantities of the same sort of Manufacture. Nay, we ought to encourage the exporting our *home Manufacture*, rather than those *foreign Manufactures* we import; because it will always be of great Advantage to our own Manufacture, to bring other Countries into the Custom and Use of wearing it rather than that of any other Country.

The third Objection of the same kind, is, That it is unnecessary to ask for or grant any Encouragement for improving or increasing our *home Linen Manufacture*; because as soon as we can make the Quantities and Qualities wanted, and can afford to sell them as cheap as *foreign Linens* can be sold, we shall certainly find a Vent for all we can make: From whence they conclude, that the present Application is not made with a View to improve and increase our Manufacture, but with the sole View of inhancing the Price of our *home-made Linens*; which instead of increasing the Quantity, would certainly diminish it, by slackening the Industry of the Manufacturer.

I have already shewn, that it is impossible for any Nation to set up or carry on any Manufacture which another Nation is in Possession of, without some public Encouragement, either from the Wisdom of their own Government, or the Folly of that of their Rivals. Therefore it must be ridiculous to say to an Infant Manufacture, or while it is in its Progress towards Maturity, You have no Occasion for any public Encouragement; because as soon as you can make the Quantities and Qualities wanted, and sell them as cheap as those who have been long in Possession of the Manufacture, you will certainly find a Vent for all you can make. This is directly saying, When you do what is from the Nature of Things absolutely impossible for you to do, you will then get what you desire.

fire. But, besides, it is not true in Fact; for, from our own Experience here at home, we find, that though we sell our *home-made Linens* cheaper than *foreign Linens* can be sold; yet we do not find a ready Vent for all we do make, and much less for all we could make, because of the prevailing Custom and Prejudice in favour of *foreign Linens*.

The Premises being thus both ridiculous and false, the Conclusion cannot certainly be right. And to this I must add, that if the Price of *home-made Linens* could be advanced by the Regulation desired, I am sure it would not be opposed by any Factor or Dealer in *foreign Linens*; because if the Price of *home-made Linens* should advance, those Dealers would certainly be enabled to sell *foreign Linens* at a higher Rate, or to sell greater Quantities of them than they do at present: And I am sure they know their own Interest better, than to oppose any Regulation from which they could hope for such an Effect. On the contrary, they are well aware, that this Regulation would have a very different Effect on their Trade in *foreign Linens*. Such *Linens* could not then be sent to our *Plantations* with the same Advantage they are at present. Our *home-made Linens* would then be sold cheaper than *foreign* in the *Plantations*, as well as they now are at *home*; consequently greater Quantities of *home-made Linens*, and lesser Quantities of *foreign*, would be sold there than at present. This would enable our Manufacturers to sell all sorts of *Linens* still cheaper here at *home*, than they can do upon the present Footing; and this would diminish the Quantity of *foreign Linens* consumed here at *home*, as well as in the *Plantations*: Consequently no such Quantities could be imported; which would considerably diminish the yearly Profits of all Factors and Dealers in *foreign Linens*. This is what they are afraid of; this is what has raised such a violent Opposition to the Regulation now proposed; and if we consider seriously from what sort of Traders this Opposition chiefly proceeds, there is
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not any one Thing can be a stronger Argument for our agreeing to it ; because it is a sure Sign it will, in all human Probability, be effectual for the End proposed ; I mean that of encouraging our *home Manufacture*, and diminishing the Quantities of *foreign Linens* imported.

But suppose this Regulation should inhanche the Price of *home-made Linens*, is it from thence to be inferred, that this would diminish the Quantity manufactured ? I have often heard, that by diminishing the Quantity of any Commodity at Market, you raise the Price. But to say, that by raising the Price you will diminish the Quantity, is to me a Paradox : For if it makes one Fellow of a lazy Disposition idle away a Part of his Time, it will add fresh Vigour to all those that are industrious and diligent. And, thank God ! I have not so bad an Opinion of my Countrymen, as to think the former more numerous than the latter.

The fourth Objection, and the last of this Kind I think worth my while to take notice of, is, That the Nation would lose the Advantage of being the middle Buyer between the Foreigner who manufactures, and the Planter who consumes ; and that the Crown would lose the Benefit arising from the Half-subsidy, which remains on the Exportation of *foreign Linens*.

In answer to this, let me suppose there are *six Millions* of Yards of *foreign Linens* exported yearly to our *Plantations*, and that these *six Millions* of Yards are worth 300,000 *l.* As the Half-subsidy, or what remains with the Crown, after paying the Drawbacks allowed upon Exportation, does not amount to full 2 *per cent.* upon the real Value, the Benefit arising to the Crown by this Exportation cannot amount to 6000 *l.* yearly ; and as I have shewn that the public Revenue would gain at least 150,000 *l. Sterling* yearly, by increasing the Number of our taxable People, if the thirty-two *Millions* of Yards of *Linen* we now import from *Foreigners* were all manufactured within our own Dominions, I think it is evident, that the Crown would

would at last be a vast Gainer by the Regulation proposed.

Then, as to the Advantage of being the middle Buyer between the Manufacturer and Planter; to say that the Nation must lose this Advantage, is a Mistake: For our Merchants at *London*, and other Parts, will still be the middle Buyers, though we had not a Yard of *foreign Linen* imported; not indeed between the foreign Manufacturer and Planter, but between our home Manufacturer and Planter; by which means the Nation would retain the Advantage of being the middle Buyer, and would acquire an Advantage much more considerable, I mean that of being the Manufacturer.

Now, Sir, with respect to the Objections of a domestic Nature that relate to the *Plantations* only, the first, and indeed the only one of any kind, which can, in my Opinion, have any Weight, is, That by taking off the Drawbacks upon *foreign Linens*, we shall throw a new and additional Burthen upon our *Plantations*, especially our *Sugar Islands*, which are already in a distressed and melancholy Condition. This Burthen, the Gentlemen who oppose this Regulation, compute, will amount to at least 15 *per cent.*; because, as they say, the whole Duties payable upon *foreign Linens* imported amount, upon an Average, from 20 to 25 *per cent.*

I am very sensible, Sir, of the distressed Condition of most of our *Plantations*, especially our *Sugar Islands*, and should be extremely averse to the throwing of any new and unnecessary Burthen upon them: But I am likewise sensible, that no Part of their Distress proceeds from the high Price they pay for *Linens* of any kind. And I must observe, that it is not the Inhabitants of any of our *Plantations*, nor their Friends or Agents, who are the chief Opposers of the Regulation desired: For, from all of them I have conversed with, I find they are mighty easy about the Affair. And therefore if any of them have joined in the present Clamour,

Clamour, I am convinced they are influenced by those who, I am afraid, have as little Regard to the Prosperity of the *Plantations*, as they seem to shew upon the present Occasion to that of their *native Country*. But, to put this Matter in a proper Light, I must clear up one Fact, which is, I find, misrepresented by those of the other Side of the Question; and that is with respect to the Duties and Drawbacks payable upon the Importation and Exportation of *foreign Linens*.

When we are to consider how much the Price of *foreign Linens* would be advanced in the *Plantations* by taking off the Drawbacks, we are not to regard the Value put upon them in the *Book of Rates*; we are to consider only the Price they are sold at by the *Linen-draper* to the *Exporter*; because if a foreign Commodity should pay 10 *per cent.* Duty *ad valorem* upon Importation, and should be valued in the *Book of Rates* 50 *per cent.* less than it is sold for to those that export it; and if that whole Duty were drawn back upon Exportation, the taking off that Drawback would not add *ten*, it would add but a very little more than *five per cent.* to the Price of that Commodity at any foreign Market. Now, as all *Linens* not particularly rated in the *Book of Rates*, imported from any Part of *Europe*, except *France*, pay for every 20 *s.* Value upon Oath, but 3 *s.* 4 *d.* three *twentieths* Parts of a *Penny*, and seven 20th Parts of a 20th Part of a *Penny*; therefore such sort of *Linens* pays upon the Value sworn to, but at the Rate of 16 *l.* 14 *s.* 8 *d.* 3 *q.* *per cent.* But as we cannot suppose that any Importer of *Linens* will put the full Value upon them at Entry, or that he will sell them to the *Exporter* without some Profit; therefore we may suppose the *Exporter* pays 24 *s.* for that *Linen* which at Entry was valued but at 20 *s.*; and consequently that the Duties cannot be reckoned to amount to more than 13 *l.* 18 *s.* 11 *d.* five 20ths and sixteen 20th Parts of a 20th Part of a *Penny*, *per cent.* upon the real Value of all such *Linens* as sold for

for Exportation: For though, according to one of the Rules annexed to the *Book of Rates*, by virtue of an Act of the 11th of his late Majesty, any Customhouse-officer may oblige the Importer to sell him the Goods at the Value put upon them at Entry; yet it is certain no such Officer will ever put this Law or Rule in execution, unless the Goods be greatly undervalued at Entry; because, in every such Case, it will be found very difficult, if not impossible, to dispose of such Goods at their full Value, by Auction or otherwise.

Again, as the same sort of *Linens*, when exported, draws back upon every 20 s. value, 2 s. 10 d. nine 20th Parts, and seven 20th Parts of a 20th Part of a *Penny*; therefore the Drawback can be reckoned only at the Rate of 14 l. 7 s. 2 d. fifteen 20th Parts of a *Penny per cent.* upon the Value as sworn to: And if we reckon, as before, that every 20 s. Value are sold to the *Exporter* for 24 s. the Drawback cannot be reckoned to amount to more than 11 l. 19 s. 7 d. five 20th Parts, and sixteen 20th Parts of a 20th Part of a *Penny, per cent.* upon the Value as sold for Exportation; in which Case, that Part of the Duties which remains with the Crown, must be computed at the Rate of 1 l. 19 s. 7 d. *per cent.* upon the Value of such *Linens* as sold for Exportation.

From hence we may determine, I think, with some Certainty, that the Duties upon all *Linens*, at a Medium, do not amount to above 14 *per cent.* of the real Value; the Drawbacks not above 12 *per cent.*; and that there remains with the Crown about 2 *per cent.* These are, I think, the highest Rates at which we can compute the Duties and Drawbacks upon *foreign Linens*. And if we examine the Prices of the several Kinds of *Linens* usually imported, and particularly rated in the *Book of Rates*, we shall find the Duties and Drawbacks there mentioned not to exceed these Rates, upon an Average. But if the Drawbacks were to be taken off, with respect to *Linens* exported to our own Settlements beyond Seas, we must not

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imagine that all sorts of *Linen* would rise in their Price to the full Value of the Drawback; for this very plain Reason, Because we now sell *home-made Linens* of all sorts in those Settlements, not above 6 *per cent.* dearer than *foreign Linens* are now sold, notwithstanding the latter's having the Benefit of the Drawback. Therefore, if this Regulation should take place, *foreign Linens* must be sold in those Settlements at a less Profit than they are at present: For no Man would purchase them, if he found he could purchase *home-made Linens* equally fine and good, 6 *per cent.* cheaper.

It is true, it may be supposed, that, upon this Regulation's taking place, the Price of our *home-made Linens* would rise in the *Plantations*. Which, I shall grant, might be the Case for the first Year or two: But I shall hereafter shew, that in all Probability this Effect could not be of any longer Continuance. For this Reason I shall suppose, that for the first Year or two our *home-made Linens* would advance in their Price about 2 *per cent.* and that *foreign Linens* would be sold at a Profit of about 4 *per cent.* less than they are now sold; so that the Price of *Linens* in general would be about 8 *per cent.* only more than it is at present. This is the highest additional Burthen that can be thrown upon any of our *Plantations* by the Regulation now proposed. And when we compute how much it will be upon each *Negro*, the Burthen will appear so trifling, that I am sure it will be thought of no Weight even by the Planters in our *Sugar Islands*, when put in the Balance against the Improvement of the *Linen Manufacture* of their *Mother Country*.

For this Purpose let me suppose, that a *Negro* consumes five *Ells* or six *Yards* and a *Quarter* of *Linen* in a Year. It is well known, that the *coarse Linens* exported for that Use, do not cost, on an Average, above 7 *d. per Ell*; therefore we must compute, that the *Linen* necessary for each *Negro* does not cost above

2 s. 11 d. Now, 8 per cent. upon 2 s. 11 d. amounts but to 2 d. 3 Farthings and one fifth Part of a Farthing in a Year; so that this Burthen, which is now so much complained of by those upon whom it is not to be laid, will not amount to 3 d. upon each *Negro* in a Year: Which is a Burthen so small, that I am sure it can no way add to the Distress of any of our Colonies; especially if we consider, that, by the late Improvement of our *Linen Manufacture* here at home, we have reduced the Price of all sorts of *Linen* in *Britain*, *Ireland*, and the *Plantations*, above 10 per cent. within these eight or nine Years; so that, though this supposed advanced Price of *Linens* consumed in our *Plantations* should continue for several Years, they could not, upon this Account, be in a worse State than they were eight or nine Years ago.

But that this advanced Price could not continue above two or three Years, is, I think, the most probable; because our agreeing to this Regulation would give fresh Spirit to our *Linen Manufacture* in all Parts of *Britain* and *Ireland*: And as a new Vent would be thereby opened for coarse home-made *Linens*, it would vastly increase the home Manufacture of that sort of *Linens*; which would quickly increase the Number of Workmen in all Parts of our *Linen Manufacture*; and would of course enable our Manufacturers to sell all sorts of *Linens* cheaper than they can do at present, by lowering the Price of Labour in that way, and by putting them in a way of making an immediate Profit by their Apprentices, and young Workmen, as well as by the Refuse and coarsest Part of their *Hemp* and *Flax*.

Thus, I think, from the Nature of Things it appears, that, by means of this Regulation, our home-made *Linens* would in a very few Years come to be sold cheaper than they are now sold in our *Plantations*. And this Conjecture is confirmed by what I may call an Accident, which happened in the Year 1712, relating to one Branch of our *Linen Manufacture*.

Before that Year we had all our *Buckrams*, called *Tillatings*, from *Germany*; but an Act having then passed for laying a Duty of 15 per cent. upon all *Linens* printed, painted, stained, or dyed in any *foreign* Parts, *foreign Buckrams* (under which is comprehended that sort of *Linen Cloth* called *Tillating*) were understood to be included, and were not therefore allowed to be entered without paying that Duty. This gave Encouragement to the People of *Scotland* to begin making a sort of *coarse Linen Cloth* fit for *Tillatings*. And though an Act of Parliament passed in the Year 1714, by which it was declared that *Buckrams* were not intended to be charged with that Duty; yet in that short Time the People of *Scotland* had got so much into the Way of making the sort of *Linens* fit for *Tillatings*, that they have always since underfold *Foreigners*: So that few or no *foreign Tillatings* have been since imported, though they have been ever since the Year 1714 free of that Duty. Which is to me a convincing Proof, that our People would, upon the least Encouragement, quickly fall into the Way of making any sort of *coarse Linen Cloth*; and that they would in a very short Time make so much of it, and sell it so cheap, as to prevent the Importation of any great Quantities of that sort of Cloth for the future.

To this I must add another Argument from our late Experience in *Sail-cloth*: For since the Drawbacks have been disallowed upon the Exportation of *foreign Sail-cloth*, the Price of *home-made Sail-cloth*, as well as *foreign*, has considerably decreased, both at *home* and in our *Plantations*. And why the disallowing of the Drawbacks upon the Exportation of *foreign Linens* should not have the same Effect, will not, I believe, be easy to account for.

I know it may be said, That Custom and Opinion would be as prevalent in the *Plantations*, as here at *home*; and that though our *home-made Linens* might not rise above 2 per cent. yet *foreign Linens* would certainly rise 10 or 12 per cent. in the *Plantations*, and
would

would from Custom and Opinion find many Customers, notwithstanding their being dearer by 2 or 4 *per cent.* than *home-made Linens*. This might perhaps hold true for some time: But I am sure it could not hold long, especially with respect to *coarse Linens*; for our Planters would examine and compare the Linens, and would certainly chuse those they found to be the cheapest and most durable. However, it will, I hope, be allowed, that if People either at home or abroad continue a ridiculous Custom or Whim, to the Prejudice of the Manufactures of their Country, they ought to be made to pay for it. I am sure no Man ought to be indulged in such a Custom or Whim by the Laws or Government of his Country.

From all which, Sir, I hope it will appear, that the Burden to be laid upon our *Plantations* by means of this Regulation, is no greater than what they were subject to *eight* or *nine* Years ago; that this Burden will not probably last above *two* or *three* Years; and that if it should last longer, it is so inconsiderable, that it can no way add to their present Distress, nor bring them into any new one. Therefore I am convinced you would think it of no Weight, when put in the Balance against the Improvement of our *Linen Manufacture*.

The second Objection of a domestic Nature which relates to our *Plantations* only, is, That if we should take off the Drawbacks payable upon *foreign Linens* when exported to our *Plantations*, it will promote *Smuggling*, and running *Linens clandestinely* into all our *Colonies*; so that, instead of being supplied with *foreign Linens* which pass through *Britain*, they will be supplied with *foreign Linens* in a *clandestine* Manner from the *French, Dutch, and Danish* Settlements in their Neighbourhood; which will be a great Loss to this Nation, without contributing in the least to the Encouragement of our *Linen Manufacture*. In support of this Objection, they say, That *Foreigners* have already
ready

ready a great Temptation to run their *Linens clandestinely* into our *Settlements*; because all *foreign Linens* that pass through *Britain*, are loaded with a Charge of at least 13 *per cent.* more than those which are sent directly from *foreign Parts*, in order to be *clandestinely* run into our *Plantations*; and that if we should add to this Charge the whole Duties payable upon Importation, it would amount to 27 or 28 *per cent.*; which would be such a Temptation for *Smuggling*, that it could not be withstood, nor the *Smuggling* prevented by any Regulations or penal Laws it is possible for us to make.

Though I have not heard it objected, That *foreign Linens* can be carried directly from *France, Holland, or Denmark*, and run into any of our *Plantations*; yet, lest the Gentlemen who oppose this Regulation should have recourse to this, when they are drove from every other Argument, I shall first shew, that it is impracticable, if not impossible, to carry on a direct *clandestine* Trade between *France, Holland, or Denmark*, and any one of our *Plantations*. As to this, I shall first observe, that if any *foreign Ship* put into any of our Ports, Harbours, Bays, or Creeks, in *America*, except she is forced thither by Strets of Weather, or for want of Provisions, the Ship and Cargo, let them be never so valuable, are by express Statute *forfeited*, and may be seized by any of his Majesty's Officers, or any other Person in that *Plantation*: Nay, if any *foreign Ship* be found hovering upon any of our Coasts in *America*, and shall be found to have *broken Bulk*, or to have carried on any *illicit* Trade with the Inhabitants, the Ship and Cargo are *forfeited*, and may be seized in the same Manner. And even when a Ship is drove in by Strets of Weather, or want of Provisions, Officers are immediately put on board, to take care she shall carry on no *contraband* Trade. And next I must observe, that a Ship, such as are usually employed in the *West-India* Trade, loaden with nothing but *Linen*, would
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so overstock the Market in any one of our *Plantations*, that one half of her Lading could not be sold almost at any Price; and that before a whole Ship's Lading could be landed in any By-creek, (for in such Places only such a Trade could be carried on), it would be impossible to prevent its being heard of all over the *Plantation*, especially in our small *Sugar Islands*; so that his Majesty's Men of War stationed in those Places, or the Customhouse-officers, could hardly ever fail of coming up, and seizing the Ship, and perhaps most of the Cargo. From all which I must conclude, that it is impossible for a Ship sailing directly from *France, Holland, or Denmark*, and fully loaded with *Linens*, to dispose of her Cargo in any one of our *Plantations*; and by disposing of a Part at one Place, and a Part at another, she would run the utmost Hazard of being seized in *hovering* with *broken Bulk* upon the Coasts, or passing from one *Plantation* to another; and, upon Seizure, would certainly be condemned as *lawful Prize*.

To get rid of this Difficulty, it may be said, That a Ship sailing from *France, Holland, or Denmark*, might take but a small Quantity of *Linen*, sufficient only for *running* into any one of our *Islands* or *Plantations* as she passed by. But can it be supposed, that any Man in his Senses would run the Risk of losing a rich Ship and Cargo, worth perhaps 3 or 4000 *l.* for the sake of the small Profit he could expect by *running* 3 or 400 *l.* worth of *Linen*? It may likewise be said, That Ways and Means might be found to make our Governors and other Officers easy, by large Bribes in the Name of Presents. But if we consider our Laws upon this Head, we shall find they are so wisely calculated as to make this corrupt Method impossible: For not only the Governor and Customhouse-officers may seize a Ship engaged in any *clandestine* Trade, but every Inhabitant in the *Plantation* may lay hold of her; and, upon Condemnation, one third is to belong to his Majesty, one third to the Governor, and one

one third to the Prosecutor. Supposing then the Governor and Officers should be all corrupted; yet we can hardly suppose a rich Ship could escape being *seized* by some of the Inhabitants: And if the Governor and Judges should refuse to do them Justice by condemning the Ship, the Seizers might appeal to the King and Council; where they would certainly meet with impartial Justice, and the Governor, Judges, and Officers, with condign Punishment.

But suppose the Governor and Customhouse-officers should through Bribery, and the Inhabitants through Fear, abstain from *seizing* such a Ship; yet still she cannot carry on her *contraband* Trade in Security: For, by the same Laws, any of his Majesty's Ships of War cruising in those Seas, have a Power to *seize* her; and would certainly make use of that Power, out of regard not only to their Duty, but their Interest; because, upon any such *Seizure*, one half of the *Prize* is by Law to go to the Crown, and the other half to the Captain and Crew of his Majesty's Ship that makes the *Seizure*.

Thus, Sir, it must appear, I think, impossible to export *Linens* from *France*, *Holland*, or *Denmark*, directly, by means of a *clandestine Trade*, to any of our Colonies in *America*; therefore the only way left, is, to export those *Linens* to their *own Settlements* in that Part of the World, in order to let them lie there till they find an Opportunity, by means of small Sloops, to *run* them into some of our *Plantations*. From what I have already said, it is evident, that, even in this way, the Risk of *running* must be very great; therefore we cannot suppose any Man will undertake it, unless he can expect a very great Profit. But the Profit to be expected, will be far short of what is pretended: For supposing that the *Linen Merchants* and *Factors* residing in the *West Indies*, expect no greater Profit or Commission by their Trade, than what is got by our *Linen-drapers* or *Factors* residing here at *London*; yet the Charges of passing *Dutch* or *French*
Linens

Linens through their own Settlements, will be as great as passing them through *Britain*, our Duties upon Importation excepted. A *Linen Merchant* residing in *France*, or *Holland*, must consign his *Linens* to a *Factor* residing in their Settlements in *America*. This *Factor* must have Commission as well as the *London Factor*; and he again must sell them to a Wholesale *Linen Merchant* residing in those Settlements, who must have a Profit as well as the *Linen-draper* residing at *London*. This *Linen Merchant* must sell them again to a *Smuggler*, who makes it his Business to run Goods into our Plantations from that Settlement: And this *Smuggler* must likewise have a Profit, as well as the *London Exporter*; for if a Man in either of these Places acts in a double Capacity, he will expect a double Profit.

This is the Case of *French* and *Dutch Linens*. But with respect to *German Linens*, the passing them through the *Dutch*, *French*, or *Danish* Settlements in *America*, in order to run them into ours, will always be attended with a greater Charge (our Duties excepted) than passing them through *Britain*. For the *German Linen Merchant* must consign his *Linens* for this Purpose to some *Factor* residing in *France*, *Holland*, or *Denmark*: And this *Factor* residing in *France*, *Holland*, or *Denmark*, must sell those *Linens* again to some Wholesale *Linen Merchant* residing in the same Place; who must sell them to the Merchant that is to export them to their Settlements in the *West Indies*; where they must again go through the Hands of a *Factor*, *Linen Merchant*, and *Smuggler*, residing in those Settlements: By which means every Yard of *German Linen* passing through the *French*, *Dutch*, or *Danish* Settlements, in order to be run into ours, would be loaded with the Commission or Profit of one *Factor*, one *Linen Merchant*, and one *Exporter*, more than it would be loaded with by passing through *Britain*, in order to be fairly exported, and sold in our Plantations.

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Thus, I think, it must appear, that the present Charge on passing *foreign Linens* through *Britain*, can be no very great Temptation for *running* them into our *Plantations*, even upon the Supposition, that *Merchants* and *Factors* residing in the *West Indies*, expect no greater Profit or Commission, than what is got by our *Merchants* and *Factors* residing here at *London*.

But when we consider, that the *Factors* residing in the *West Indies* have always *seven and a half per cent.* Commission and Storage, and that the *foreign Linen Factors* here have not above *two and a half per cent.* Commission, and *a half per cent.* Warehouse-room; and likewise when we consider, that no Merchant in the *West Indies* will deal for so little Profit as our *London Merchants* or *Linen-drapers* usually do; we shall find no Occasion for excepting the Duties payable upon Importation out of this Account; but, on the contrary, we may justly conclude, that the Charge of passing *foreign Linens* through the *Dutch, French, or Danish Settlements* in *America*, in order to run them clandestinely into our *Plantations*, will be very near as great as the Charge of passing them through *Britain*, (including the Duties payable upon Importation), in order to *export* them *openly* and *fairly* to our *Plantations*.

After what I have said, I think it needless to dispute the *Quantum* of the Charge upon *foreign Linens* passing through *Britain*; (though this likewise might be disputed); because you must now see, Sir, that no *foreign Linens* could be *run* into our *Plantations* with any great Advantage, though no Part of the Duties should be drawn back upon Exportation. And as I have shewed, that *foreign Linens* could not advance above *eight per cent.* in their Price, though the present Drawbacks were taken off; therefore the *foreign Smuggler* would always be a great Loser: For he must sell cheaper than the *fair Trader*; and must be at a much greater Charge, because such a Trade must always be carried on in private

vate Creeks and Corners ; so that the landing of the Goods, and the Carriage of them to the Place of Sale, must not only be very difficult and dangerous, but vastly chargeable.

Let us consider, Sir, that the Risk and Charge of running Goods *clandestinely* into any Country, is always so great, that we find it is no where practised to any great Degree, but where the *Smuggler* gets at least 40, 50, 60, or 100 *per cent.* In the *Spanish West Indies* all *European* Goods are so dear, by means of the Duties and *Indultoes* imposed by their Government, and by the *Monopoly* the rich Merchants in *Spain* have of that Trade, that all those who carry on a *contraband* Trade, may still gain 40 or 50 *per cent.* ; and sometimes *two cents per cent.* by their Trade, as often as they get clear off: And till within these 20 Years their Coasts were so ill guarded, and their *Guarda Costas* so cowardly, that there was scarcely any Risk in carrying on a *contraband* Trade with the Inhabitants of that Country. Here in *Britain* we find there are hardly any Goods *run* in upon us but *Brandies* and *Teas*. And the Reason why there are such Quantities of these two Commodities *run* in upon us, is, because the *Smuggler*, when he gets clear off, makes at least *one cent.* and sometimes *two cents per cent.* by his Trade. With respect to other Goods, though there are many foreign Commodities that pay above 14 *per cent.* Duty ; yet we find there is seldom or never any Attempt to *run* any of them, unless it be some very fine Goods which are easily conveyed ashore, and easily concealed. And it is observable, that *coarse Linens* are seldom or never attempted to be run into *Britain*, though it must be granted, that the *running* of them into *Britain* is as easy, nay, more easy, than the *running* of them into any Part of our *Plantations* ; because it is safer to hover upon our Coasts, in order to take the proper Opportunity for *running*, than to hover upon the Coasts of any of our *Plantations*, especially our *Sugar Islands* ; and

though it must likewise be granted, that if all our Drawbacks upon the Exportation of *foreign Linens* were abolished, there could then be no greater Temptation for *running* them into our Plantations, than there is now subsisting for *running* them into *Great Britain* and *Ireland*.

This Objection, therefore, can be of no Weight with any Gentleman, who does not frighten himself with Chimera's and imaginary Consequences. It was as strongly urged against taking off the Drawbacks formerly payable upon the Exportation of *foreign Sail-cloth*, as it is now against taking off the Drawbacks payable upon the Exportation of *foreign Linens*. The *clandestine* Importation of *foreign Sail-Cloth* into all our *Plantations*, was then represented as the certain Consequence of taking off the Drawbacks; and was certainly in that Case as much to be apprehended, as it is in the present. Nevertheless, these Drawbacks were taken off. And though it is now very near *seven Years* since these Drawbacks were taken off; yet we have never heard the least Complaint of the *clandestine* Importation of *foreign Sail-cloth* into any of our *Plantations*. On the contrary, I am convinced, there is as little of that Commodity *run* into our *Plantations*, as of any Commodity whatsoever: And yet there is now as great a Temptation for *running foreign Sail-cloth* into our *Plantations*, as there would be for *running foreign Linens*, even suppose the Drawbacks were disallowed upon the latter, as fully as they have been upon the former; because the Charges of passing them through *Britain* are equal, and the Duties upon *foreign Sail-cloth* are rather higher, in Proportion to their Value, than the Duties upon *foreign Linens*.

The third Objection of a *domestic* Nature, which relates to our *Plantations only*, is, That if we should take off all the Drawbacks upon *foreign Linens* exported to be consumed in our *Plantations*, it would oblige most of them, or at least would very much encourage them to set up *Linen Manufactures* of their

own :

own: For, say these Gentlemen, as our present Duties which are drawn back upon Exportation, amount at least to 15 *per cent.* the taking off these Drawbacks would be the same with giving our *Plantations* a Premium of 15 *per cent.* upon all *Linens* manufactured and consumed among themselves: And what greater Encouragement, say they, can any Country desire for setting up and carrying on any sort of Manufacture?

I have already shewn, that if the Drawbacks were taken off, it would not raise the Price of *Linens* above 8 *per cent.* in our *Plantations*; and that in all Probability, this Advance in the Price would not continue above *two* or *three* Years. But if it should continue for a longer Time, it would not be such an Encouragement as could enable any one of our *Plantations* to rival us in the *Linen Manufacture*: For, with respect to them, we may be said to be in possession of that Manufacture; and by the Difficulties we have met with here at home in the setting up and carrying on of that Manufacture, we may be convinced, that *eight per cent.* is not equal to the Advantage a Nation has by being in the Possession of any Manufacture. Besides, in all our *Plantations*, they have many Ways of employing their Hands, by which the Master, or Undertaker, may make a greater Profit than he can do by employing them in the *Linen Manufacture*; and whatever the public Advantage may be, it is certain that private Men will employ themselves, and all the Hands they have in their Power, in that Way they can make the greatest Profit. At the Prices our *Linens* are now sold in *Britain* and *Ireland*, our common Spinners cannot, one with another, earn above 3 *d.* a-day each, both for themselves and their Masters; whereas our Planters reckon they make at least 10 *l.* a-year, which is above 6 *d.* a-day, by the Labour even of every *Plantation Slave* or *Negro*. Therefore we must conclude, that though some of our Planters may now and then make a little *Linen* for their own Use, by way of Amusement for their Wives
and

and Daughters; yet none of them will ever set up a *Linen Manufacture*, in order to make a Profit by the Sale of their *Linens*, till their Hands are vastly increased, and the Price of Labour much cheaper than we can suppose it will be in any of our *Plantations* for many Years, I may say for many Ages to come.

Indeed, if we neglect our *home* Manufactures, particularly that of the *Linen*; if we refuse those public Encouragements we may easily give, and which our Manufacturers think they have a Right to, the Humour which is already too much in vogue among the Poor in *Ireland*, of transporting themselves to the *Plantations*, will become general all over *Britain* as well as *Ireland*: In which Case such Multitudes of our poor People will transport themselves thither, that in a few Years the Price of Labour may become lower in the *Plantations* than in *Britain* or *Ireland*; and then, we may depend on it, they will set up Manufactures, not only of *Linen*, but of *Woollens*, *Leather*, *Iron*, &c.: Which is an Effect we could not prevent by a prohibitory Law; for the Consequence of such a Law would be, that our Manufacturers, instead of returning home, would all go and settle in the *French Plantations* at *Canada* and *Mississippi*, who would receive them with open Arms, and allow them to carry on any Manufactures they had a mind.

These, I think, Sir, are all the material Objections I have any where met with against our taking off the Drawbacks upon *foreign Linens* exported to our *Plantations* or Settlements beyond Sea. Whether the Answers I have made to them are sufficient, I must leave you to judge. But I cannot leave this Subject, without desiring you to recollect the great Incroachments that have been of late Years made upon our *Woollen Manufactures*. The *French* not only supply themselves, but send large Quantities to *Spain* and *Turky*; the *Prussians* not only supply themselves, but send large Quantities to *Russia*, and several Parts in the
North

North of *Germany*; the *Danes*, as I have already mentioned, are taking all the Measures they can think of for setting up *Woollen Manufactures*; and even in *Flanders*, from whence we got our *Woollen Manufactures*, since that Country came into the Hands of the *Emperor*, they have been, and are still at vast Pains to re-establish their *Woollen Manufactures*; for we had an Account in our News-papers of last Month, that the Government there have resolved to clothe their Army with the *Woollen Manufactures* of their own Country only *. All these Nations formerly made use of very little else but the *Woollen Manufactures* of *England*; therefore the Consumption of our *Woollen Manufactures* in *Asia* and *Europe* must certainly have decreased within these forty or fifty Years. This Decrease is felt in many Parts of the Kingdom; and would have been much more severely felt, if it had not been for the Increase of our Plantations abroad, and our *Linen Manufactures* at home. We have therefore great Reason to take every Measure we can think of for encouraging *home* Manufactures of every kind; and for that Purpose to render all Materials fit for Manufacture, and all Things necessary and convenient for the Support of Life, as cheap and easy as possible; for it is by high Duties upon such Things only that the Trade of any Country can be undone. No Country was ever undone by laying Duties upon *foreign Manufactures* for the Encouragement of their own; especially when those Duties are all drawn back upon Exportation to any *foreign* Country. *Venice* and *Genoa*, it is well known, owed their Ruin chiefly to the People of *Portugal*'s falling into the Method of sailing round the *Cape of Good Hope* to the *East Indies*; by which means they furnished all *Europe* with those *Persian* and *East-India* Goods, which before came into *Turky* by *Caravans*, and from thence were brought into *Europe* by the *Venetians* and *Genoese*. This Ruin

* See the *St James's Evening Post* of Saturday, March 11.

they may perhaps have accelerated by high Duties; but it was not by laying high Duties upon *foreign Manufactures* consumed at *home*, for encouraging the Consumption of their *own*; it was by laying high Duties upon the *Necessaries of Life*, and by allowing no Drawbacks upon those *foreign Manufactures* which they transported to *foreign Countries*.

As I at first proposed, I shall now conclude with observing a few of those Advantages the Nation may reap by a proper Encouragement of our *Linen Manufacture*. I have already taken notice, that, by manufacturing at *home* the whole 32 *Millions* of Yards of *Linen* we now take from abroad yearly, we should add 300,000 to the Number of our industrious People: That this additional Number of industrious Subjects would consume of our *Woollen* and *Leather Manufactures* yearly to the Amount of 504,000 *l.* which I believe will appear to be a much greater Value than we now export yearly to *Germany* of both these Sorts of Manufacture; with this Advantage, that it is a Consumption which no foreign Nation can take from us, either by the Encouragement of their own, or the Prohibition of our *Woollen* or *Leather Manufactures*: That, besides this additional Consumption of our *Woollen* and *Leather Manufactures*, they would consume yearly of the Produce of our Lands to the Amount of 766,500 *l.*; and that they would add yearly at least 150,000 *l.* to the Produce of our *public Revenue*.

Besides these Advantages, it would be a vast Saving to the Nation yearly. For these 32 *Millions* of Yards of *Linen* cost the Nation yearly, as some compute, 2 *Millions* of *Pounds Sterling*, at a Medium; but I shall suppose they cost us but 1,600,000 *l.* at a Medium, which is at the Rate of a *Shilling* a Yard one with another. This I am sure is the least we can value them at; especially considering, that great Quantities of the *foreign Linens* imported are brought hither in *foreign Bottoms*, consigned to *foreign Factors* here,

here, (some of whom return to their own Country with great Fortunes acquired at *London*), and sold by them for the Benefit of the *foreign* Merchant. Now, this saving of 1,600,000 *l.* yearly, must add so much every Year to our national Stock of *Gold* and *Silver*; or it must prevent so much *Gold* and *Silver* going out of the Nation yearly: So that it must either add greatly to our Riches, or prevent our impending Destruction.

But the Advantages the Nation would reap by the Improvement of our *Linen Manufacture*, would not probably stop at our being able to supply ourselves only with *Linens*. As *Linen* is a Commodity of universal Use, we should in all Probability begin to serve other Countries with *Linen*, especially those of a more Southern Climate; and those Wars and Commotions which all Countries upon the Continent are more subject to than we are in this Island, might give us an Opportunity of furnishing some of those Countries with *Linen*, which have for many Years drawn great Sums from *Britain* annually for that very Commodity. The Advantages we might reap by such a farther Improvement, are without any assignable Bounds; but if we should only succeed so far as to be able to export yearly a Quantity of *Linen* equal in Value to that now imported, it would double every one of the Advantages I have mentioned.

Another Advantage is, that our furnishing ourselves only with *Linens* of our own Manufacture, would vastly diminish the Poor's Rates all over *Britain* and *Ireland*: For by the manufacturing of such a great Quantity of *Linen*, and the Increase thereby occasioned in Farming, and in the *Woollen* and every other Manufacture, all our Poor would be employed; and as both old and young may be able to earn their daily Bread, by working in some Part of the *Linen Manufacture*, none of our Poor could ever become burthensome to the Parish they belonged to, except the Sick

and Wounded, and Children under eight or ten Years of Age. By this, Sir, you must see, that the Number of proper Objects of Charity in every Parish would be vastly diminished; and the Number of those who are able to contribute towards the Support of such Objects, would be increased. Therefore, if this Regulation for the Improvement of our *Linen Manufacture* should be disagreed to, I must think it would be but Justice to retaliate upon those who oppose it, by making them maintain all those who, for want of Employment, shall hereafter become proper Objects of Charity in any Parish either of *Britain* or *Ireland*.

These, Sir, are a few of the Advantages the Nation may reap by a proper Improvement of our *Linen Manufacture*; and they are such as, I have shewn, we may endeavour to reap by means of the Regulation proposed, without thereby exposing ourselves to the Danger of suffering in any other Branch of our Trade. These are Advantages of so high a Nature, that I am sure they will be regarded by you, and by every Man who has a Concern for the Prosperity of his Country, or the Happiness of his Fellow-subjects. And I must earnestly recominend to you, Sir, and to every Gentleman who has the Honour to be in your Station, to consider, that the People of this, and of every Country, are much governed by what may be called the Spirit or Humour of the People. Every one knows, that in many Parts both of *Britain* and *Ireland*, there is at present a very high Spirit towards the Improvement of the *Linen Manufacture*. This laudable Spirit has been raised and fostered up by several worthy Gentlemen at a very great private Expence. If these Gentlemen see their generous Endeavours are not seconded by the Public, it will allay that Spirit which has already contributed so much to the Benefit of the Nation: For, by the late Increase of our home Manufacture of *Linens*, we have reduced the Price of *foreign Linens* above 10 per cent.

cent. within these eight or nine Years, which is a Saving to the Nation of at least 160,000 *l.* yearly. This is an Advantage we now enjoy. But if, by our denying to grant any public Encouragement for our *Linen Manufacture*, the Spirit which now prevails should be stifled, we shall probably run retrograde; our *home* Manufacture of *Linen* will decrease instead of increasing; and as our *home* Manufacture decreases, the Price of *foreign Linens* will be raised upon us; by which means we shall not only import greater Quantities yearly, but shall also be obliged to pay dearer for what we import. Therefore I hope no Member of the *British* Legislature will allow himself to be frightened by vain Fears, and imaginary Dangers, from complying with that which I have shewn to be extremely proper, if not absolutely necessary, for encouraging the Manufactures, and increasing the Riches and Power of his Country.

To conclude, Sir: As this is a new Regulation which greatly concerns the Trade and Prosperity of these Kingdoms, many of the Members may perhaps be for delaying to do any thing effectual in it till next Session, that they may have Time to inquire into, and consider the Sentiments of their respective Constituents. This I am so far from disapproving, that I wish it were always the Case. I wish it were established as an unalterable parliamentary Maxim, *That no new Tax or Regulation should be agreed to the same Session it is proposed.*

The Proposition now made to you tends, in my Opinion, so evidently to the Encouragement of our *Linen Manufacture*, and is so free from any solid Objection, that I am convinced it can no way suffer by a mature Deliberation: And from what his Majesty did in the very first Year of his Reign in favour of the *Linen Manufacture* of Scotland, we may be assured

ured of his ready Concurrence with this, or any other prudent Measure that can be proposed for encouraging *that Manufacture* in every Part of *Britain and Ireland*.

P I N I S.

